

# The Games machine

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**JAPANESE**

## Console Dawn

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Not everything went smoothly programming *A-POD*. Apollonix, and Jez Crowther tell us of some of the cock-ups in getting the graphics to work.

## TGM — TELLING YOU LIKE IT IS

For those venerable gamers among us who can remember looking out for an Atari VCS — "The complete games centre", and finding by the time of the Combat bridge or Asteroids, or the feeling when the pocket money ran out on CDS-games, the current resurgence of consoles may seem like a joke in poor taste. And to add to the cynicism, you only have to ask "what happened to the Nintendo revolution?"

For almost two years we've heard rumours that this Christmas there will be nothing on the telly, nothing in the shops that won't be Nintendo — but indeed nothing, not even a flurry of games to support the non-too-spectacular sales of the machine. It's a bit sickening when you hear about the excitement in the States or Japan. And NEC, sitting on the hottest title property around to threaten Nintendo's hold, the PC Engine, seem to have forgotten Europe altogether. Sega hasn't, but it's still early days. And Commodore, an excitingly launched, but so far untried out beast.

So why is TGM getting worked up about consoles? Because there is every indication that they really are on the way this time. Nintendo may not be admitting it (why should they?) but there's a little comradely sense in their releasing a 16-bit machine in the States when there is still such a lot of mileage to be got from their current 8-bit runaway success. Europe, however, undermanned, is ripe for the 16-bit attack, and no substantial 8-bit market to undermine. Sega have seen the light and are leading the way. The Mega Drive is here (albeit in tiny quantities) and sources close to the Japanese industry suggest that a 16-bit PC Engine won't be far behind.

How will this affect the home computer market? Well, read Phil Harrison's report starting on page 16 and find out.

## WIN!

### A JAP CONSOLE!

Win one of the great new games machines, plus five super games to run on it from CAPCOM, and there are more great Capcom computer games for numbers-up! See page 88

### CRUISER CRYSTAL!

Two winners make their own joysticks at the Joystick Fairery and enjoy an afternoon at famous Alton Towers, plus Cruiser Crystal joysticks for the winners-up, courtesy of POWERPLAY. See page 88

## AND...

# 0898

Check out page 80 to see what we've got for you this month on the TGM Hotline! These great people from Thalamos, to celebrate their 16-bit launch of **HARKNEY** on the Atari ST and Amiga, have stumped up some competition prizes. Don't hang around — get phoning!

# CHECK OUT THE NAMES.C



**VIGILANTE**... Vigilante is a new game for the Atari 2600. The story is set in a dark, industrial world. You play as a vigilante who fights against the forces of evil. The game is a fast-paced action game. It is a must-have for all Atari 2600 owners. **THE NEW ATL.**

**THE NEW ATL.**... The new Atari 2600. It is a must-have for all Atari 2600 owners. It is a fast-paced action game. It is a must-have for all Atari 2600 owners. **THE NEW ATL.**

**JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH**... This is a new game for the Atari 2600. It is a fast-paced action game. It is a must-have for all Atari 2600 owners. **THE NEW ATL.**



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# KULT



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# TGM REPORT

## Konix strengthen console as time rushes past

Exclusive  
by Barbara Page

Konix have doubled the memory of their revolutionary Multi-System console — because extended software houses demanded it. But the release date has been put back to late September, and even as many developers are worried that they won't meet deadlines for the first games.

Konix's decision to upgrade the memory to 256K RAM should silence one of the biggest criticisms that the first British-developed console has met. Though Konix insisted that a novel system of continuous disk access would make 128K RAM perfectly adequate (TGM16), many critics saw the meagre memory as the Multi-System's fatal flaw.

Chris Green, one of the console's two key designers, explained to TGM that the move came after a major conference between Konix and software houses earlier this spring. "We got so much pres-

sure from all the software developers. What they want is the extra memory for it to page the screens... it makes animation much easier."

Access to the 3.5-inch disk simply wasn't fast enough for game animations, he said. "You have to have RAM in

that."

Green assured potential buyers that despite the expense of RAM chips, the move to 256K wouldn't up the price. "The price has to stay fixed at £199," he said. "Basically, we have cut our margin [profit] to get the extra RAM in

August, but last month many had still not received the vital development systems they'd need. Pete Stone — boss of Palace, which is considering Arabian for the Konix console — observed "I doubt we'd finish anything before the end of the year."

The release date has already been set back about a month. Konix spokesman Michael Banner explained that it's only a single change, saying "when we first mentioned it it was an August release date.



## Sega: yes, we have no Mega Drives . . .

Don't look for the 16-bit Sega before early 1989, UK representatives Virgin Mastertronic are warning gamers. The £199-odd machine simply won't make Britain's list.

Good news is that a £30 adaptor will make the Mega Drive compatible with Sega Master System games... bad news is that Virgin Mastertronic

boss Mick Alexander clearly can't count in Japanese.

Explaining why he'd put the brakes on the Mega Drive, Alexander told industry paper Computer Trade Weekly "there's only three pieces of software available for it at the moment"... but TGM reviews four in this issue's console special!

there."

A port originally intended for cartridge games will now be used for an optional extra £116 — raising the question of whether the Multi-System will, like the ST, eventually suffer from some gamers demanding the extra memory and being unable to own dual machines.

### Game delays

But even these technical improvements don't solve the biggest problem now facing Konix — time.

Software houses are apparently being asked to finish the first Multi-System games by

now we're looking at the PC Show (September 27-October 1).

Indeed, some suggest that the console — first revealed by an exclusive TGM story last autumn — was rushed out for trade and press previews as quickly as possible after TGM broke the news and other magazines followed suit. They say Konix therefore didn't think the specification through thoroughly, and may only now be coming to grips with the inevitable problems of such a complex and inconsistent games machine.

Konix boss Winston P Holloway was unavailable for comment.

[illegible]

Starting early next year on British Satellite Broadcasting's Galaxy channel, the *Warpzone* Satellite Class will follow teams of young adventurers through a space-fantasy world of lasers, robots, and 3-D animation using Inventor's *Ultimate FreeSpace* technology.

The seminar involves penetrating an alien culture, which just goes to show that all this new-fangled technology hasn't changed man one bit.

But it should be worth tuning in, for among those up to the snuff with *The Saturday Evening* is columnist Robert Harris, of *Knightrider*'s famous and many began *The Travelling Man* of course.

Just one problem — when British Satellite Broadcasting (BSB) launches its first programs in September, to pick up any of them you'll need the Special receiver plus a satellite dish. Not a trivial cost of about £250.

## SAM delayed to September

Page	Book or Article Title	Page	Page
100	100	100	100

Major changes to Miles Gordon Technology's SAM Coupe project mean the Spectrum-compatible version will get its highest-priority status this September - not May, despite MGT's previous market plans.

Originally planned to be solicited through mail order, the new CINC machine will appear in **TUMORS** and now go straight to chains and independent retailers.

But MGT boss Alan Miles warned that availability may be limited at first. "There is a finite capacity to retrofit our boats in the next few months," he told TQM. And before saving the general public, MGT will have to fulfil some 1,500 orders from users of their other products (mostly Spectrum motorboats).

Defending the decision to go through shops instead of MCI Direct, the company's soon-to-be-dismantled mail-order system, Miles emphasized that ERM will still be backed up with daily service. "We're

located in the mid-order state; to act quickly and decisively with customers. <sup>1</sup> For now.

With many computer problems, Miles alleges, 'the main structure is often the last person to hear about it, and that's why there are so many faults'. But by dealing directly with the shops, Miles hopes to 'break the chain' of distribution and other intermediaries that often separates hardware manufacturers from their customers.

**South Africa**

© 2000 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

new micro-in software - without a decent range, the machine is unattractive and useless. So software development for Hild starts at the beginning of June, when 80 prototypes and development tools will be sent to major software houses.

And final meetings of the board were kicked off in July, when 200 finished machines will be sent to retailers and selected areas to be put through the paces. "We really want to give the machine a hammering and make sure we've got everything covered," said Mallon.

SAM has THE SAM, a 60-colour palette with Analog style HSB mode allowing all colours to be chosen at once, and seven-channel sound – a substantial improvement on previous 5-bit versions.

■ **ADT's new disk drives** will work with machines, not Floppy in Bank Notes, since 88

But surprisingly, the Amiga looks set to dominate at next month's Commodore Show, with everything from BASIC to the Whizzy Hardware on display.

The *Strategic*, authors of *Evans and Speedball* and arguably the biggest names ahead, will join *Knights* creator TIGR during Jan. 26 at a workshop for aspiring game writers. Also there will be Evans' *Ev's Story* seminar.

Wed. Lib. offers - exhibits from June 2 to 4 at the Mineral Exhibition, Orono, Maine - in quarters facing entrance on west side.

That of the oval, graphically should be **Forward Class**, getting a Victor-Magnum package — grab an image, add sound, animation and trim, and save this bit as disk or video.

Artists, animators and DTP designers will also find ready-made compositions in the Mirada Laser series from Chicago Thompson Services. These different slides provide some backgrounds, clip art for DTP, and entire slides.

And public-domain software supports *AmigaNet*, which has the latest screen savers from Amazon, including the most incredible HAM pictures plus the first preview of a coming-of-age story.

**Figure 2.1** *Illustration of the relationship between the two types of variables*

Clasificación: **unifactorial** (por necesidad)  
estructural o conceptual (de los **atributos**).

Forward, which is a routine library for their RISC, and a portable (seasonal) developer's version of Cerebus. Hillert's Cerebus Link also hints at 'writing papers for C programmers'.

Mineralside, Aspen will have the latest version of Provent (STAMPED), while Kame Computers offers the 486 to 80386 database and 486 to 80486 8-Axis (Kame.com).

And the show also seems strong on hardware. Among the promising comparisons found, and even those shown

From **MAST**, the Anti-Air Management System for the Super drive (made from George Thompson Services), and a range from Power Computing including hard disks, a 4.25-inch floppy and PC compatible Super drive, and 80080 emulation cards.

Green Software will have the CTS 99 Audio SoundBlaster, a stereo amplifier with two speakers, and the owners won't neglect the Palm; it'll be continuing to push the old favourite Load-It. Data models, also CTS 99.

Finally, there'll also be daily question-and-answer sessions with those long-established gurus of the Commodore scene, KPGO's Singapore-based Commodore Products Team (Singapore).

■ Further information: www.royalbritishsociety.org.uk  
 Royal British Society,  
 George House, Arlington  
 Park, Arlington, Marlborough  
 Wiltshire SN8 1LH. Tel: 01672 510000



■ **Quake** plan to raise money for Third World problems by selling aid games. Is their toasting a bit to diverse 'war' games, lecture on human-impulsing software? Is any make of mine, in preparation for a month of sales through Quake's London shops starting June 27. Warlords and peripherals are well-

Dendroica can be made at any of Eastern's 100 shops nationwide during June and July; for further information, contact the shop.

Dr. A. Agapornis, Manager  
 Research Institute, 221 1st St.  
 New York, N.Y.

■ Now the bad news from **Pravnet** – March's budget means that all online and video are subject to VAT. That adds 10% to all charges, including subscriptions and content. The money-grubbing started April 1. Pravnet subscribers should have received a letter about it, and information is also available on [www.Pravnet.co.uk](http://www.Pravnet.co.uk).

# ALTA ROTA



beware  
*The Angel of Death*

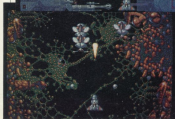
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# TGM PREVIEWS



## Xenon II — it's a MEGABLAST!



**I**mpressively packed with 'surprising special effects' and a 'very hot sound-track', the next release from Imageworks could be only one thing — the latest Runup Brothers game, and the sequel to the tremendously successful *Xenon*. Yes, it's *Xenon II — Megablast*. It seems that

all your hard work in the original game was for nothing, as the world has returned to its sorry state of affairs that existed before you first set out on your battle with the Xenites. But this time the Xenites have a secret weapon: a device that allows time travel. With this they have placed time bombs in each major era with which they will destroy past eras, and thus control their own future.

With the lure of REAL cash you decide to help the Xenites in their quest for total world and time domination.

*Xenon II* is 35% wider, smoother and 50% larger in play area, with three-layer parallax scrolling over land and seascape.

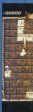
Expect *Xenon II — Megablast* this summer from Imageworks, on the ST (pictured), Amiga and PC. ■

## Balls out for Im

Shootout-based Runup Brothers' new arrival for such great shoot 'em-ups as *Demolition* and *Revolution*, have wrapped up their lineup for this year's release. *Spherical*, available on ST, Amiga, CDi and PC in June.

As the quest continues north-west, you take control of a magical sphere which must be pushed through a maze-like dangerous fantasy world. Various objects and spells can be picked up along the way, all help in your progress across the level.

*Spherical* features both single and two player modes, as the latter is fitted into control of a magical witch. The beauty of the graphics are accompanied by two different soundtracks.



# SLEEPING GODS LIE



Empire say they **WON'T** let their games lie quiet, for Sleeping Gods Lie has already been revived, warmly by the TGM crew who saw Digital Digital Enterprises' latest knockdown in April.

It's primarily released on the ST, followed closely by the Amiga version, with PC and OS/2 versions later in the year — and judging by the success of 1996's *Ward* (Feb. 2nd October), this should be one to stay awake for. Sleeping Gods Lie isn't for the mystical world of Texas, a world which has been abandoned by the gods that created it and left in the hands of the people. These people have been viciously suppressed by the devil-

hated Chief Wizard, who uses demons to enforce his power on the people. The people have only one hope, a sleeping god — situated in a distant land — who must be awoken to handle the crisis.

You're given the short sword, and must trek through eight kingdoms, over 80+ landscapes, and past numerous foes dispatched by the Archmage who doesn't take too kindly to visitors.

Like the play area, the game's atmosphere will add to the strongly strategic atmosphere, as you listen to rumors, acquire weapons and set on instinct — it's the only way to survive!

## Double-oh trouble for Domark

Bound in beds, and then time he's **BAD**. In fact, he's so bad he's had his double-'O' status revoked, and is ordered to keep out of the CIA's affairs. But he's more involved in this mission than he realizes, and there's no stopping Bond in Domark's game of the film *Licence To Kill*.

The game closely follows the film's plot, featuring all the most memorable scenes from the action-packed top-screen extravaganza. But it's still a



secret as to whether Cary Lowell (James), with Timothy Dalton, who plays volleys military pilot Pam Reuter, will be in the computer version!

Expect versions for all major formats in June, along with the silver-screen version.



**TIME SCANNER** More legs here from Activision this month as *Time Scanner* is finally based on all formats — following its TV appearance on *Moonmouth*!

The classic puzzle game will have all the features of the arcade hit with a few extras.

## r Fnbow Arts



# HAWKEYE HAWKEYE



**T**exas, who created a storm on the Commodore 64 with such hits as *Skeleton and Armalyte*, are now releasing their hit shoot-'em-up *Hawkeye* for the Amiga and ST. It's frenetic action as you, and your trusty armory of four guns, trek through a desolate landscape riddled by mutating creatures.

Three of your guns can run out of ammunition, so be sure to pick up everything in sight. Getting four parts of a shattered access card, allows you to pass into the next of 12 land-scapes. Priced at £19.99, *Hawkeye* should be out now. (Amiga screen.)

## A change for the beastlier

Saga have once again found themselves on the home wine via the helpful hand of Activision. The latest Saga conversion is *Altered Beast*, the riotous and addictive arcade smash of last summer.

The horizontally-scrolling play area contains numerous

weird creatures, all of which must be punched into eternity. Kill enough of the strange creatures, pick up their spirit balls, and you'll have enough



power to metamorphose into one of several beasts — each with a killer claw. Major versions should be out in August.

## INTERPHASE

Journey to the edge of Dream time with Imageworks' *Interphase*. In the future people play into a dream machine to get their kicks — kicks that come from the mind's a dream all-powerful fix.

You were one of those people, but realised the serious undertone of the dream you were entering for The Corporation and jumping left. However, many corporations still being affected by the dream and it's up to you to enter The World Machine and rescue



thousands of millions of people, before they are twisted for ever.

Enter the fantasy zone soon, on the Amiga, ST and PC. ST screens?

## BATTLE CHESS

The most charming chess game for the Amiga is now being translated to the ST. Imageworks' *Battle Chess* gained 80% from TGM when we reviewed the Amiga version last year, and the imminent ST version should do similarly well — although the original did have 90% of ex-

plained sound.

Despite playing a essentially tough game, *Battle Chess* also plays tough physically — the characters literally remove each other from the board. However, the least hearted can play a 3-D game without all the leg breaking, arm-twisting, head-bashing ...



# MURDERS IN VENICE

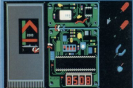
Columbo has been back with a bang — and this time the French adventure game has the mystery of a whole new city and some of the most of Venice, the setting of their latest murder puzzle.

But *Murders in Venice* is more than just a murder game. It's a 3-D world that the players explore, explore, explore — and solving — a lethal case.

And remember the game

was *Columbo's Murder* games, about as popular as *Francis and Agatha Christie* is over here, with someone else best of features designed to make *Murders in Venice* an investigation with a difference.

There is no *Interphase* soundtrack where you can control details of what you've just heard, save those areas of you use the game's, and a means for collecting captured photos



suspense.

Two subgames add depth to the challenge. *Anatomy* defines the body in a nerve-racking process, for as time ticks by you've got to pick symbols, see them correctly and figure out how the puzzle of anatomy completely works.

More relaxing amusement comes with the character editor, where you can edit your personality and image — it's

like an art studio with lots of effects.

Packed with clues and packed with an interesting collection of objects, all necessary to solve the mystery, *Murders in Venice* looks like a new for adventure-nerds and a fresh look for those who play. Look for release in the September on ST and Amiga in March, with PC due to follow. ST screens?





# CIRCUS ATTRACTIONS

Amiga screen



Circus Attractions

PC (EGA) screen



Juggling

PC (EGA) screen



High Wire

CBM Screen



Trampoline

Atari Screen



High Wire

Amiga Screen



Knife Throwing



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# CRITICAL LIST!

## GUN GETS CHOKER!

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## CRASH VICTIM!

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## DARK AVENGER

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They're back again, and this time to stay, the hardware makers say. Bigger, better, faster, more colourful and louder, the very best thing for ardent gamers, 0-bit Japanese consoles have swept America and are now poised for the attack on Europe with all 16-bits firing. So far only Sega's Mega Drive is 16-bit, but Nintendo aren't far behind and a 16-bit PC Engine should be with us soon. Phil Harrison gives the lowdown on the mustering forces of the rising sun, while Robin Hogg and Warren Lapworth examine the games for various consoles (including the aging Atari 2600, which is fighting back) to find out whether the software justifies the means in this second....

# Console Dawn

**T**he British games world is a tiny part of a global market dominated by all things Japanese. It is often said that Nintendo have failed in their attempt to take over the UK — but perhaps the real reason is that they just can't be bothered to operate in such a restricted and small market for very little gain.

With luck, the advent of 1992 and the free market will make the Japanese think more seriously about selling their products here. For the Japanese have, without a doubt, the most powerful and exciting products in the world of computer entertainment. As TQM has reported in the past, machines like the little PC Engine and the 16-bit Sega Mega Drive are available in Tokyo at the moment, with growing software and peripheral support — so we can only hope that the machines come over here with complete, quality catalogues of products all ready for release.

Unfortunately, past experience with Nintendo products does little to justify the ideal. They are currently releasing some product into Europe that is years old — and looks it too.

When talking to the Japanese about their UK marketing policies, the standard response is "Gatai Britain — ah yes, I know, that they missed all the sales of Europe — well, American over there, don't they?", Nintendo are typical of the Japanese when it comes to the order of marketing. Japan and the Far East first, the North American continent next, and Europe last (if we're lucky).

It's a shame we got treated this way — the UK software houses are the first to slap

their cheatbooks down on the table for the hottest arcade locations, often long before the machines themselves hit these shores. And the same is true of console games.

NEC act as if they aren't that bothered about worldwide sales of their PC Engine; indeed, they came under fire in Japan for marketing the console as an alternative to Nintendo, not as the vastly better machine it clearly is. Reports differ as to the true number of Nintendo consoles worldwide, but it's definitely in the tens of millions, whereas the PC Engine is lucky to have scraped into seven-figure sales yet in Japan. When it comes to economics, the Nintendo is the one that's going to get the software support over all others. So even though the PC Engine has twice the number of colours and a CD-ROM drive, it's never going to have the market presence to beat Nintendo.

## No no Nintendo

There is another factor to consider: the restrictive practices of Nintendo when it comes to software. They hold all cards over product and its shipping date, releasing it under their own label. There have been horror stories about product not being shipped for months after completion — even when the developer has paid in advance for 200,000 cartridges and packaging costs. It's rumored that a couple of UK software houses have had their fingers burnt this way.

Other UK developers have been saying recently that Nintendo is an 8-bit machine not worth worrying about here. It's basically too late for the UK software houses to get

into the huge market anyway — things change fast, and as usual the majority of us got left behind in the rush.

So it's obvious why most UK publishers have reacted so favourably to the Kuroi Multi-System. Perhaps for a change we can have the head start over the Japanese. It would be nice to see Kuroi burst into Japan in a couple of years' time, with a complete catalogue of European-developed software and peripherals.

And there's no reason the Delta shouldn't do it this time. Technically and creatively, the UK development teams take with the best in the world — it's just that a Japanese Nintendo programmer would laugh at the suggestion of spending eight months writing a game for the Spectrum, regardless of how good the end result might be.

Perhaps the problem is that the UK market has traditionally been dominated by keyboard machines — it took an effort from the Atari drive-in schools with the BBC computer back in the early Eighties.

Many people are saying that the time is right for the market to change over to the dedicated games console. Both Atari and



**"The Japanese have, without a doubt, the most powerful and exciting products in the world of computer entertainment"**

## SEGA MEGA DRIVE

# Altered Beast

**A** driven have the rights to the computer conversions but the Mega Drive game is the coin-up in nearly all respects. A move away from previous 3-D coin-ups, this time it's horizontally scrolling beat-'em-up action with a twist.

The daughter of a great god-like being has been kidnapped to an evil prisoner. One or two females are brought back from the dead to fight their way through the scores of legions of undead creatures to rescue the daughter.

A graveyard is the setting for the first of the four levels, with rotting zombies, grave guardians and winged demons rising to the challenge of beating the undead hordes to a pulp.

Most of these long-dead invaders require a good few punches or kicks to send them to foot under (again). But hit an alien wolf and you get a power capsule which provides that extra bit of punch power. Collect ten more and the hero transforms into a werewolf blessed with super powers.

But things don't always run smoothly even for werewolves and other altered beasts — the scorebar pops up at this point and turns into Mega-monies, each a

graphical treat and with their own unique attack patterns.

Other than an liner Field issue sample of speech at the start ("What beauty you gave..."), *Altered Beast* turns out very close indeed to its arcade origins, complete with two-player mode (the 3-bit Sega ver-

sion suffered enormously without it). The main characters and enemy sprites look ever so slightly washed out, but the detail is all there, and background graphics are top on.

The gameplay is a natural for the Sega even though it's hardly original — because the action is totally compared with *Space Harrier 2* and *Super Thunder Blade*, but *Altered Beast* is a coin-up conversion to the latter — and that can't be bad.

**TGM rating 80%**



**"It would be nice to see Konix burn into Japan in a couple of years' time, with a replete catalogue of European-developed software and peripherals"**



The Sega machine is rumoured to be coming into the streets by late autumn (they said that last year, too — it was supposed to be at the Santa Cruz PC Show, but magically never turned up). And it could really stop it at Christmas if its UK distributor (Virgin Mastertronic) get the marketing and price correct. Out in Japan they advertised the Mega Drive and a game on grey-free TV (when it wasn't even Christmas, and that's what's needed here to really get the market stimulated into buying something again — let's get back to the days when good games sold 100,000, not just ten times less if you're lucky).

Perhaps the Konix console will have double effect if it's a success. Firstly, the satisfaction that Europe and the UK can do just as well as Japan. Thank you very much. Secondly, and more importantly, it will prove that the UK is a serious arena in which to test consoles, and worthy of investment by the big Japanese firms. This will result in a rise of price and performance which can only mean better machines and games for the consumers — us.

The costs of producing high-performance consoles capable of complex games are going to drive dramatically as soon as the problem of waste DRAM chips starts itself out.

The limiting factor is memory and its costs. As graphic resolution and colours increase, so does the memory required to display them. A complete screen of graphics on a C84 takes at worst 12K to fit in memory. On the Amiga and similar machines, a screenshot can easily take upwards of 32K. Combine this with the fact that a good game could have many screens full of graphics and sprites, and memory runs out very fast — and don't forget the digitised sound effects and music, the carefully programmed gameplay... all eating memory.

An exciting time is ahead in the next few years, when memory is no longer a factor: money can be spent developing consoles with transputer processors, capable of multi-tasking nations of instructions every second. Hardware with built-in commands for 3-D graphics effects, outputs to drive complex interactive add-ons, networked machines for true role-playing adventures, digital outputs to your hi-fi for true audio-sound experience... the possibilities are endless and the prospects for the player look better and better.

## Winning runners

But once again it is down to the marketing people to sell the product. Many times in the past, quality machines have appeared and disappeared as quickly again, through bad marketing and consequently little support from the public and the software

Commodore are making console versions of their 16-bit computers — technically identical to the original ST or Amiga, but without keyboard. It was always said from the start that Commodore should never have attempted to sell the Amiga as a business computer. The Amiga is a very powerful games computer, and should have been sold as one — with a price tag to match. So perhaps both Atari and Commodore have lost the initiative and will give little from the console versions. What say we...

Industry sources are talking now of a complete turnaround in the market within three years: today's major 8-bit software houses will live off budget games, somewhere in the sub-£5 range, also full-price games software will be dominated by console product from here and overseas, with expensive simulator-type product restricted to the high-end PC-compatible yuppie market. The ST and Amiga machines will fit comfortably somewhere between the high-end games market and the low-end simulator market.

Accurate or not, these suggestions seem to mean good news for the dedicated games player, with the exciting possibility of many titles on a wide range of quality consoles.

## The right price

The new variable, unfortunately, is price. Out in Japan you can buy a brand-name Nintendo for something in the range of £100-£150. A PC game costs under £25 (much less than it does here), and the new Mega Drive 16-bit machines are amazingly under £100. British shops will have to play as close to these prices as possible.

# Alex Kidd in Miracle World

**N**intendo may have Mario but Sega have little Alex Kidd, an endearingly cute fellow resembling a monkey in a red suit. Fresh from his exploits on the 8-bit Sega, Alex pops up on the Mega Drive, fresh-faced and ready for action — platform and ladders action as it turns out.

If we could read Japanese we'd provide a paragraph or two about the plot but Japanese isn't one of TGM's strongpoints and so Alex is doomed to wander through *Miracle World* without purpose.

Very much in classic Super Mario brother style, Alex's quest is to penetrate the King's fortress on the other side of *Miracle World*.

Alex is usually armed with an unbreakable large fist and a powerful kusari kick. Using these to dispatch the enemies to the great afterlife is the name of the game, but so too is collecting coins and other treasures.

Coins make the world go round and with them Alex can participate in Japanese games for a cost (consequently Alex is to us non-orientals) with a motley bunch of characters, prizes for winning being useful extra objects which include a pedal-power helicopter, motorbike and a pogo stick for novel ways of transportation. A crooked stick is the most useful, allowing Alex to



float through the air for a limited period only.

Alex wanders through forests, villages, gardens, swims an ocean, floats through the air and leaps from platform to platform with breath-taking abandon.

The enemies are ever cute and include

snakes with faces, jelly scoopers, blaster fish and other weird organisms of a true Japanese style. With a distinctly Super Mario brother flavour, the action is simple to start with (later levels turning real nasty as the layouts get ever more complex).

houses.

With a console, however, the marketing is complicated in that you have a target market (games-players only) and don't have to justify high prices, with talk of business used (it'd have consistently been for PC sellers worldwide, not through prices they are among the most expensive machines available), but through convincing the public that their machines are the best and most reliable (not really true on either count). It is quite marketing that makes IBM machines a success.

Another force to help the sales and market presence of a machine is support, both software. Success. After all, a computer is only as good as the software that runs on it. Consoles have one further problem, in that when you turn them on nothing happens unless a disk or a cartridge is in place — there is no user interface in the operating system.

The upshot of this is that the only way the user sees the machine's capabilities is through the games developed by the software houses. The console manufacturers therefore need to have the software developers on their side, and give them technical support.

Software availability is another major selling point, so this is going to buy a console with no software for it. This is why the Sega 32-bit system has sold better in this country than any other console — Sega managed to push the latest title quickly into Mastertronic's hands.

And any successful console must have the latest arcade conversions available for

it, though it's unlikely Sega will ever see their coin-ops on the Nintendo!

Soon enough the market is going to see the gap between the quality of coin-op product and console conversions decrease. This is going to have the effect of whitening out the smaller fish in the arcade market and pushing the big two (Sega, Namco, Taito etc) into producing more interactive and exhilarating games that are really worth the money you get — Namco's forthcoming release of *Wrestling Run* is going to be probably the first in a line of multiple and accurate projects that has the detail to take arcade gaming another step forward.

The console revolution is not over yet — and will be going to be affected by it. TGM will report from the front line and send dispatches as the battle rages.

Phil Harrison is a games designer with David Image Developments.



The modern bustle of Tokyo (right) may be where the console games genius comes from, but the inspiration for some characters and backgrounds springs from quieter and more romantic situations (above)



Japanese photographs by Phil Harrison

## SEGA MEGA DRIVE



Several rooms can be repeated by hit and error and the odd well placed kick at chests reveals extra lives, objects — or time bombs if you're unlucky.

The action tells each scene, action among the Pyramids, for instance, is accompanied by a superb Egyptian piano. Also faces killer cars, planes, mad ax-men, monkeys, fish in underwater scenes and angry snakes up in clouds. Also leaps from ring to ring, platform to platform, runs around, leaps through the seas and flies through the air with the greatest of ease.

It gets without saying that Alex Kitzel is highly playable and incredibly addictive. It's a tough cookie game to crack what with Jordan games and both vertical and horizontal scrolling levels to pose problems. The Mega Drive is given a chance to show off its well detailed graphics, a superb two-direction parallel scrolling effect and all brought together in the most playable of forms.

**TGM rating 85%**

# Super Thunder Blade

Sega shockily reveals their savings list to create a new game following the arrival of the Thunder Blade cheaper in the arcade. The lost-down sections, not surprisingly, prove to be lowest and better for the Mega Drive, but lack a 3-D effect. Where the Mega Drive really has to work, namely in the 3-D sections, the game doesn't fare so well. Layered graphics move past with more than enough speed about them, but there's just too fast — buildings in particular stand firm with all the

realism of jelly.

Despite these problems the game as a whole moves along incredibly smoothly accompanied by a sense of perspective which is convincing, while aerial, tank, ship, and helicopter sports are excellent.

Not quite as super as the title makes out, Super Thunder Blade nonetheless proves a playable, if tough, shoot-em-up. The pace and challenge is enough to test the mettle of many an arcade expert.

**TGM rating 78%**



## NINTENDO

# Rush'n'Attack

Two-player games are always in vogue on the consoles, the Nintendo want to add games like Rush'n'Attack. A two-player Green Beret may not appear to be original or indeed progressive, but Rush'n'Attack certainly aims to be playable.

Two Green Berets are sent into the Russian (or should that be Russian?) mountains to initiate arms reductions at a violent end. Parachuting into the first complex, they get out their knives to spike the incoming Reds. With a siren blaring, the enemy attacks. Rocket launchers are carelessly set around by the adversaries so pick them up and return the ammunition to render the easy way.

The strategy have improved their defences since the first attack — now its levels include submarine pens, air bases, radio towers and of course the prison. High-flying missiles, robot dogs, jet-coasters, pistol-toting officers all pack a mighty military punch, but then, Green Berets have nothing to fear.

The animation and use of colour isn't as good as it might have been, the techniques have good detail but rather static, are bland. As ever Nintendo have made the

game an always playable one, and Rush'n'Attack really shines on the great two-player action to overcome its not-so-hot in-game appearance. Ignore the ethics and get playing these Russians!

**TGM rating 81%**



# Super Mario Bros 2

The Mario gang are back one, not two. Mario, Luigi and Yoshi with Mario and Luigi joining up with a couple of friends in the sequel to the game which needs no introduction. The nasty King Koopa is up to no good and needs defeating fast, otherwise it's curtains for the population under his early rule.

Mario and Luigi can't kill Koopa all by themselves. Toad and Princess Toadstool are also in the gang, each character having their own attributes, but Mario is the lead all rounder (well he'd have to be, wouldn't he?). The gang have adapted super strengths,

performing super jumps and picking up not only objects but enemies as well to throw all over the place. And in the grass are objects to throw, potions to open bonus screen doorways into secret sub-levels where bonus items await, even mushrooms for much needed extra lives. The characters have lost an energy level reduced through contact, a more brutal system of survival, but like Super Mario Brothers 1 it can all go wrong with one false step.

Many of the secret rooms are well hidden and you really have to try everywhere

# SEGA MEGA DRIVE

## Space Harrier 2

**N**o console is complete without a version of *Space Harrier*, especially a Sega console. The Fantasy Land had taken foul of the Dark Harrier's tyranny and in Part 2 the Space Harrier is sent in to square the land that's evil in the only way he knows how — mass shoot-'em-up action.

*Space Harrier 2* is made up of 13 stages of surreal non-stop blasting. Any of the first 12 stages can be skipped at the start, but to get to the final stage all stages must be completed beforehand.

Like all *Space Harrier* games the graphic detail is what it's all about and using the

16-bit's power, brilliantly coloured, defined and animated graphics flash past at speeds approaching, if not equating coin-op standard. But it's with the arrival of the end-stage quarters that the Mega Drive really gets to dazzle — very weird and utterly vicious, the Guardians move with an astonishing smoothness and zero flicker. Seeing

is believing!

*Space Harrier 2* is a significant advance on the existing *Space Harrier* games in graphic and sonic quality as well as overall presentation. The speed of the game is instantly lost (in keeping with the classic coin-op's style), the graphics and the way they are handled are all excellent, and the ferocity of enemy attacks makes other versions look positively passive.

The combination of all these things makes *Space Harrier 2* a truly awesome piece of coding.

**TGM rating 95%**

### AND STILL TO COME...

The amazing thing about the Mega Drive is that the above four titles are relatively old and came out when the Mega Drive was launched. The results should be nothing short of stunning when programmers get to grips with the machine. Watch out for:

- Power Drift
- Super League
- Rambo III (Provisional title)
- Get Run 3-D
- Fantasy Zone 2
- Super Hang On
- World Cup Soccer
- Bloodball: Competition
- Afterburner



# NINTENDO

## Super Mario Bros 2

to find them. Certain impressively wily can be destroyed by throwing bombs at them.

Part 2 kicks off with a brief vertical section before returning to the more familiar style of progression from left to right. The objective is the same at level's end which is often locked (go down into a pit to find the key but watch out for Phantoms). There awaits the hero at the end of each level spring eggs and fireballs. If you're quick you can pick the egg up and throw it back! At the end of the third stage Mosser awaits and only a bomb or three can see you through to the next world.

Dreamland is made up of seven worlds, each split into three sub-levels including both the more familiar horizontal levels and vertical levels aplenty. Quickstart, regular, hard pits, cactuses and waterfalls are all to be found within. Flying carpets can be ridden, or why not launch a life on a monster in cross water channels. It's truly amazing what the Mario gang can do and find among the seven worlds.

To say that *Super Mario Bros* 2 is playable is like saying the Cretaceous is quite a fast machine — the

game redefines the word 'playable' and is far and away a major leap over the original. It's involved, deceptively tricky, has major improvements in the graphics and sonic output, and, most importantly of all, is superlative fun to play.

**TGM rating 93%**



## Ghosts 'n Goblins

**A**fter the knight may be currently battling with *Ghosts 'n Goblins* in the simulation but on the Nintendo he's still got problems dating three years back when he went out to save the forest of princesses from the evilst of nasty creatures. *Ghosts 'n Goblins* kicks off with a nice introductory screen as the Great Demon appears, poking up the princess and really whisks her away. (Why though is Arthur half undressed in this section? We have a right to know!)

Arthur's quest begins in the spooky graveyard where nothing but a mouse stirr, at least for two seconds before the zombies emerge from his foot under. Armed with multiple flying swords, Arthur can dispatch the zombies back to town whence they came and even pick up treasure while he's there. The zombies it seems are thick, they sometimes carry weapons, but neglect to use them on our hero. Be much the better, and provided he has a useless weapon like the torch, Arthur can put it to good use.

If he gets his (very heavy) off given his story armour leaving him with nothing between his pain and the cold wind but a



## ATARI 2600



able software support (at console levels, at least). Programmers have learned the ins and outs of what is, after all, a decent console: a large colour palette to hand, a decent sound chip and now some decent games.

Pulse Distribution Limited handles the Atari 2600 and around 60 games for it. Among the relatively named games such as Laserblast, Demon Attack and Megamania there are some conversions to be found, film conversions, home computer game conversions including Commander Xelion, Minter Games, California Games, Ghostbusters, H.E.R.O., Pitfall and more.

Pulse Electronics Limited can be contacted at Unit 14, Millham Park Industrial Estate, Millers Road, London, E17 8DP (Tel. 01-521-7171).



of note is the ability to land on the carrier and a mid-flight refuelling sequence to keep the plane airborne.

Vertical scrolling shoot-'em-ups are less than ideal a penny but the charm of River Raid outweighs what are still primitive graphics with an appalling lack of detail about River. Colour is weak, which is more than could be said for the original, unfortunately the character blocks are still one-colour. The graphics haven't kept pace with progress, but in their own simple way they are perfectly adequate and serve their purpose well.

The gameplay redresses the simplicity of execution with more depth about it than the original (although even with height to worry about and a new landing sequence this doesn't say a lot for the game's complexity). It does have immediate appeal, and the ever-narrower River ensures a near-infinite challenge.

**TGM rating 70%**

## River Raid 2

The original *River Raid* devised by Carol Shaw became an instant classic when it was first released, despite its chronically primitive graphics. With a gradual difficulty level involving the River of No Return gradually narrowing and inherently simple gameplay, the sequel rates (or should that be flies?) on the back of the original. In *River Raid 2* the F-14 has been added in for the very common F-14, complete with search carrier to launch from (the carrier can't fall off the edge of the deck on take off).

The River winds its way deep into enemy territory with a horrific amount of military hardware on either side to discourage the odd pleasure flight and F-14 attack plane from flying along it. Speedboats, hot air balloons and other non-aggression vehicles pop up from time to time, but don't stop using those cannon, torpedoes and missiles to wear down the enemy. The familiar bridges from Part One also make an appearance which, while proving solid enough to string off collisions by enemy F-14s, can be destroyed.

The F-14 is now capable of climbing and diving to avoid hazards, although the bridges are solid enough to stop anyone showing off by flying through the legs. Also

## F-14 Tomcat

Back in the air again with the luxurious F-14, this is among the best flight simulators for the console and a console entry in general.

An F-14's presence is needed in the skies around the Gulf. A Middle East country is up in arms and its Air Force is out looking for trouble. This situation is clearly unacceptable and so the USA needs a carrier with you, a Top Gun pilot at the reins.

The F-14 can take to the air to engage enemy jets at up to Mach 2.4 with a full HUD and a variety of air-to-air missiles —



and, of course, an onboard cannon. It's not just even when the birds are heading Gulf-ward, you're still to get back and land the jet, which means you'll find out very quickly what a Top Gun is supposed to be in the land of the real.

The most noticeable thing about F-14 is the detail to be found within the game's

## NINTENDO

## Ar'n Goblins

pair of boxer shorts — one more bit in this state is enough for Arthur to die of shame.

Arthur's travels take him past the graveyard into even spookier forests, a rubery



fire bridge, a cavern complete with angry skeletons and only the one passage where a fire-breathing winged lizard (a dragon) to you is ready to loose pesky fumes.

"Playability comes first" seems to be the motto with Nintendo games and

*Ar'n Goblins* is no exception. The backgrounds are well-detailed and spooky enough to give you the creeps. The sprites lack significant detail but have a generally cute look to them (even the evil demons look rather pleasant).

The graphics are a compact and fairly accurate representation of the coin-op, each level gaining more and more detail, leading up to a fairly and consistently powerful climax. The cute original sprites combined with adequately music makes this is a good conversion. One small gripe. Does the map screen have to appear and scroll every SNAKY time you die?

**TGM rating 84%**

## CLUB NINTENDO

Have you been feeling left out, let down and brushed off? No need any longer! Now Nintendo owners can revel in all things Nintendo through their own official Club Nintendo magazine.

Reviews, previews and hints & tips can be experienced by sending off the application form found in all Nintendo gamepacks.

## ATARI 2600

## F-14 Tomcat

graphics, presentation and game situation as a whole. Colour isn't used in abundance, but the primary objective seems to have been to create a realistic atmosphere with subtle colours. Sound is used effectively, with the whine of the engines, the thrust of the cannon and sizzle of well implemented roar of a missile launch.

Detail is of paramount importance, from

the start with the deck captain signaling the plane to start its engines through to the automatic carrier landing. There's so much within F-14 Tomcat. Top marks for technical merit with this game — it really does push the console.

In unfair comparison with computer flight simulators, F-14 Tomcat looks decidedly average — it may not have quite the same depth, but for a console game it's a remarkable program. By landing the F-14 after completing a mission, it isn't that easy!

**TOM rating 82%**

## PC ENGINE

## Tiger

**N**ow, on your PC Engine console, you too can be a scourge of the skies in Tiger, a conversion of a late console helicopter game.

Wending your way up vertically scrolling levels — the screen also rotates left or right when needed to accommodate the full width of the playing area — chain guns are used to blast tanks, boats, planes, helicopters and gun emplacements which the manœuvre as you throughout the game. Some leave loads behind when destroyed which give extra speed, an extra life, smart bombs, water pump speed, or extra firepower.

The sprites are a mixed bag: copiers are indistinct, larger planes are well painted, but tanks and gun emplacements are very arcade-like. Backgrounds aren't packed with detail, but some ground fea-



tures are neatly drawn. Music and effects are what we've come to expect from the Engine: nothing special but fitting to the action.

Tiger is quite a difficult game, so it isn't quite as easy to outplay but tougher players, but whatever your ability, it holds your interest. With each successive game a little more progress is made, ensuring you don't give up until it gets very difficult — and it certainly does!

**TOM rating 86**

## P-47

**S**ounding more like a form to fill out than anything else, a P-47 is in fact a combat plane. A coin-up conversion sub-titled 'The Freedom Fighter', this is a game for Rogues fans everywhere, as you pilot the World War II fighter against German squadrons. The fighter flies rightward, the ground scrolling beneath it (or clouds behind it while German planes attack). These are easily dealt with by machine-gun fire, but bombers, fighters, are best tackled with bombs.

Once packed up into a continue-play option, extra speed, or missile, bomb, tank or explosion weaponry. In basic terms, P-47 is pretty unremarkable, as was the coin-up it originated from, but shoot 'em ups are unique in that they are easy to get into and, even if only adequately done, are endlessly playable. The sprites are compact and detailed (except for the bland looking bombers) and move smoothly around the sky. Most backgrounds complete the authentic coin-up look, using rare panesles scrolling — the clouds tinted orange by



the sun in Level 2 are very attractive. Effects are flat but the tunes are punchy and add to the fun.

**TOM rating 88%**

## Deep Blue

**S**ub-aquatic action await you in Deep Blue, a solid shoot-'em-up which puts you at the controls of a certain submarine convincingly disguised as a bright pearl-regal fish. The camouflage is its slow easier initiation into underwater tunnels and caves that are the source of a

## MENTIONING MENTION

Supplier of the PC Engine games for this issue, Mention Technical Services are going Japanese with a vengeance. Not only is the PC Engine at a bargain price of £159.95 (incl. PAL TV converter as well), they've also got over 50 Engine games. Titles include P-47 Freedom Fighter, Danus, Omega 86, Space Hunter 2, Warbird, Plan-L and Afterburner, Thunder Blade (the latter three available soon) and even Bubble Bobble 2.

CD-ROM players and games will be available soon as well as the PC Engine version (CD-ROM). A VHS tape (bulletin 1000) style will also be available soon (£9.95).

Mention also stock a very large number of imported Nintendo games, a Nintendo joystick and a PAL TV convert-emulator (£24.95) to run Japanese and American format titles. Titles include Super Mario Brothers 1,2 and 3, Bubble Bobble 2, Mike Jang 1-3, Contra (Gyros for us Brits) and many, many more. Also available will be Sega Mega Drive (£179.95) plus games such as Mr. Kombat, and Alien Breed (£24.95) as well as Fantasy Star 2, and Super Thunder Blade (£24.95). Out Run 3-2, Power Girl and Afterburner are expected soon.

Mention Technical Services, 28 Lakeside Place, Haverstock, GB4 9TH, (0428) 758077. They promise to keep prices as low as possible, and with such machines as the Engine at 59 short of £160, Mention look set for a busy future.

dangerous army of underwater creatures, mutated by dumped nuclear waste.

Fish, squid and sea snakes swim past and can be killed by the standard projectile weapon. A helpful cyan fish leaves behind a pod which restores a little health (increases speed, or give light bullet, anti outer or bubble beam weapons).

The thin screen area gives an unusually



wide Cinemascope effect. Backgrounds use few colours and have no real detail, but their texture and colour scheme create a great atmosphere — particularly with the upward floating bubbles.

Music is deceptively realistic, sometimes in a soothing way, sometimes hectic, sometimes eerie. The garbled sound of the shoot-sucking tabs after it's hit is the highlight of an otherwise average set of sound effects.

Deep Blue isn't easy — the building fish movement often makes them tricky to dodge or shoot while other creatures approach at a frightening speed and rate. Only one life is given, but at least the sub can take plenty of hits before sinking forever. There are only four levels, though each is very long, but it's the lack of variety that spoils the game.

**TOM rating 84%**



# CAPCOM

## A CAPTIVE AUDIENCE

In August last year (TGM009), we ran a feature on Captive Communications — better known as Capcom — because it looked as though their coin-op conversions were worthy of attention. We were right. Previewed then as a forthcoming product, *Forgotten Worlds* has justified our faith. But it's only a start. Robin Hogg and Dominic Handy went to US Gold, the licensed UK base for Capcom, to have a look at two of the latest conversions which look like being world beaters.

**W**hen you think of Capcom, you probably think *Commando*. For it was this product that shot the Japan-based company to 8-bit silicon stardom early back in late 1985 — closely followed by the more-impressive version of their *Ghost 'N' Goblins* in early '88. It was on these polished products that software houses like game and grew. In 1987, Elite's Capcom licence ran out, and in

their massive marketing operation is led by Captain Commando — but also in stature. Capcom realise their US market is different. Tsujimoto accompanies a loyal band of designers to American trade shows every year to tap operators and find out their needs. As Bill Craven, their US Sales Manager, says: Tsujimoto will walk into a store and buy 10,000 worth of tokens to bring the American culture to their development teams back in Japan.

The teams of 25 people contain planners, software programmers, character designers, hardware technicians and musicians. Capcom believe their independent development teams have become their trademark — pioneering unique visual and sound techniques reflected in their hit coin-ops. Capcom nurtures young professionals and further instils the independent drive by promoting team within the company.

Although Capcom are primarily known for their arcade muscle, they are tapping all corners of the entertainment industry. In true anthropological Japanese style, they see their company as a tree from which much diversification makes it wide and fruitful, but without the strong development roots it would not be possible grow and expand. Capcom not only produce for other manufacturers — Taito, Sega, Namco, Nintendo among others — but also for the

electronic toy market, TV games and, of course, the home computer market.

Capcom's current technical baby is their 'tweezer' 'super chip'. From two-and-a-half years development they have compacted the power of ten normal arcade circuit boards into two microchips. Not only is this easier for your local arcade owner to swap games in cabinets, it also means that the games will become more and more powerful — with laser-quality graphics at a non-prohibitive price.

### Not forgotten

Capcom have practically stated their company on the new super chips — costing £5.5 million to develop — but it seems to have paid off with their first super system release, *Forgotten Worlds* (lauding the arcade circuit some eight months ago), but as have conquered this month from US Gold. US Gold have already sold over a quarter of a million units from the five Capcom products they previously released, and hope *Forgotten Worlds* will substantially increase that figure.

Already the game is receiving glowing reviews from the TGM team (see page 56 in this issue), so what is behind all this success? Could it be the innovative storylines that have made Capcom renowned? *Forgotten Worlds* goes something like this...

Emperor Blos has unleashed



The leadache for Taito, Graham Lilly and Software — \$-way scrolling in the two-year-old arcade hit *Black Tiger*

true Japanese spirit the arcade giants designed to give fellow Tsujimoto in June 1985, have not only grown in size — expanding from small beginnings in Osaka, Japan, to offices in Tokyo and Hokkaido, and overseas to Sunnyvale, California, where

Captive Communications, founded by ex-'toy maker' Kenzo Tsujimoto in June 1985, have not only grown in size — expanding from small beginnings in Osaka, Japan, to offices in Tokyo and Hokkaido, and overseas to Sunnyvale, California, where



an ovel of evil deities whose sole purpose is to wreak havoc on all forms of civilization. The once-beautiful landscape has become barren, the homesteads where people once grazed their intergalactic fawns have become forgotten worlds. However, the vengeful minds of the homesteads have created two super warriors who are to gain revenge on the slithering horror. An awesome task awaits them: they must first pass three demigods, The Golden Dragon, The God of Destruction and The Panemecium. But don't be disheartened, for each wave of enemies destroyed deposits a small amount of money which can be saved up and spent in one of the numerous weapons shops that appear at regular intervals.

All computer versions allow simultaneous two-player action, creating a very addictive atmosphere. US Gold version this could follow *Bionic Commands* in becoming their top-selling Capcom release (topping *Bionic Commands*'s 75,000).

### Striding on

Following in August should be *Black Tiger*. The game was originally planned for last October, but due to various difficulties with the programming placement of the project it has still not appeared — despite first appearing in the arcades almost two years ago. US Gold are now avoiding most problems by placing the project with three different teams: Taitex (Spectrum and Amstrad), Graham Lilley (ST and Amiga) and Software (C64). As with *Bionic Commands*, *Black Tiger* uses eight-way scrolling, as an armour-clad hero explores a multitude of platforms in a mysti-

cal world (shades of *Ghosts 'N' Goblins*?). As in *Forgotten Worlds*, three demonic dragons are causing complete mayhem, and it's up to you and your lively sword to slay the salivating monsters before they gobble in a meal of user and chips!

Talking of chips brings us to *Strider*, Capcom's second release utilising their revolutionary super chip. *Strider* is currently sweeping the floors in the arcades (something a lot of arcades need!), outselling all its competitors for the past three months. However, you'll have to wait till September for the computer version. Capcom obviously aren't taking part in the Gorbachov's *Glasnost*: *Strider* dumps you armed only with a sword in the middle of Russia with the mission to infiltrate the Red Army and foil their plans for global domination. Being a highly-trained secret agent, you are extremely mobile — triple backflips over an incoming KGB agent and minotaur robots are all part of the bargain. The visual capabilities and impressive sonic accompaniment are already making *Strider* THE platform and ladders game to be seen playing at the moment.

All the computer versions are being programmed from the folks that brought us

*Thriller*, *Blade*, Manchester-based Taitex.

Finally comes *Shinobi 'N' Ghosts* (previewed in TOMB14), the long-awaited follow-up to *Ghosts 'N' Goblins*. Software Creations, programmers of massive hit *Bionic Commands*, have been chosen to convert the amazing arcade machine — let's hope the capabilities of the home computers can do the super chip-based arcade machine justice. As we said in issue 14, the graphics have to be seen to be believed.

Outselling all the arcade opposition, *Strider*, left and below, promises to be another huge Capcom hit on home computers, and who can wait for *Shinobi 'N' Goblins* (the arcade poster below)?



We also said: 'Capcom have got it made for 1989, and it's as true today as when we said it.'



# WE'RE TUNING JAPANESE!

## ● WIN a PC Engine & loads of games!

*from Capcom, star purveyors of the  
Japanese arcade art*

**T**hey're the Giants of the video game! Capcom, the people who brought you the amazing *Street Fighter*, *Super Mario Bros.*, and now *Street Fighter II*, have a head start ahead of them, with a host of mega titles to be converted onto YOUR computer.

There's *Black Tiger*, which is out very soon, and the massive arcade hits *Shinobi*, *Mr. Gato* and *Strider*, lined up for the end of the year. And there's more on Capcom in this very issue's special feature, so turn there now and get geared up.

In generous Japanese style, Capcom are offering a great Japanese prize, the infamous PC Engine, as the top prize. The first-prize winner will also get five fab games for the Engine - all tried and tested by the TGM crew before we can extract them from their gleaming pawes.

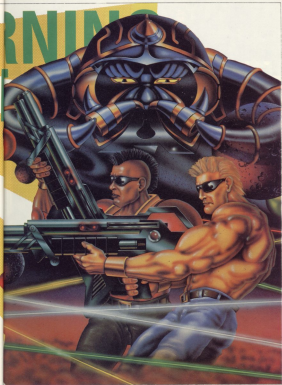
Ten runners-up will receive FIVE Capcom computer games (the choice is yours, from any already released or imminent).

To be in with a chance of winning the PC Engine, brush up on your Capcom history notes and name the games featured in the FIVE segmented screen pictures on this page.

Send your entries, along with your choice of five Capcom games, to: **I'VE BEEN CAPTURED COMP, TGM, PO Box 16, Ludlow, Shropshire SY9 1DB.** The normal competition rules, as detailed in the masthead, apply. Any-one found cheating will be sentenced to an appearance on the Japanese game show *Exorcism!*



TURNING  
ON





# GRAND MONSTER SLAM

Amiga screen



Listen to the crowd roar as you enter the stadium and take up your position opposite your opponent.

PC (EGA) screen



Have you the skill to fight off the furious beloms with your pump-stick?

C64 screen



These are some of your opponents. Knock them out and go from round-to-round to the super league.

Atari ST screen



GRAND MONSTER SLAM!  
Can you become this years Grand Slammer?



**Available for the C64, Atari ST, Amiga and PC**

Available on  
C64, Atari ST,  
Amiga and PC



# The Gamer machine

## REVIEWS

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US Gold/Capcom's coin-op hit roars in, all conversions firing, and what a game it is! See the feature on page 24 and thrill to what follows!



**machine**  
STAR  
UPDATE

### 43 ■ BLOOD MONEY

From Psygnosis — the software house with barely a hitch — is a 16-bit shoot-'em-up to knock the socks off even the most hardened gamer/player. This is the one to buy for its intro sequences alone!

- 33 ■ SPEEDBALL
- 34 ■ DARK SIDE
- 44 ■ POWERDRIVE
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### 32 ■ KICK OFF

Amco strike gold with their football sim which boasts sophisticated new ball and player control



### 49 ■ THE KRISTAL

Previewed for the first time anywhere in TGM, the mammoth epic is now here. A stage musical that never made it, The Kristal's programmers have made no concessions in providing us with this star player.



### 46 ■ MILLENNIUM 2.2

A true 16-bit game! cry the reviewers of this Electric Dreams space fantasy with graphics to match Stanley Kubrick's vision of 2001.

### 36 ■ ARCHIPEL-AGOS

A cross between The Sentinel and Virus, Aspid Software/Logotron's clever 16-bit, multi-player strategy and arcade game is weird and utterly compelling.



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Never make a destructive god angry

# FORGOTTEN

Capcom



"Sorry, but we're fresh out of extra heavy hitters..." (snapping for extra ammo). Or simply for from the top. Average. (somewhere in the top and Spectrum magazines)

**A**cross all formats, *Forgotten Worlds* comes across primarily as an ace shoot-'em-up (particularly excellent in two-player mode) polished to sparkling perfection by its superb graphics. The 16-bit version, with all the flashy trimmings, have the advantage but even the humble Spectrum gives its all.

The *Forgotten Worlds* of the title are in a sorry state, more playthings for a post-apoc. Rite, superior at all the worlds and the Almighty God of Destruction created eight lesser gods of pure evil, and together they wreaked terrible vengeance on the worlds. The damage has reduced the worlds and their people to little more than far-distant memories.

But although Rite may have broken their backs, the inhabitants' spirit remains undiminished. Now, the *Forgotten Worlds* try to fight back through a mind-melding which forms two psychic allies — super warriors descended to fight Rite to the death and defeat his guardians as they do so.

Even super warriors face some tough going when up against Rite's holy guards — the Golden Dragon, the God of Destruction and the Phoenix, all vying for a final clash at the end of each level.

The two macho men of the future weave their weaving route through horizontally and vertically scrolling levels, meeting all before them; business is good in this particularly violent neck of the woods. The action kicks off in the Phoenix level as the warriors jump through the first of many named sales pitted against aliens, missiles, and just about the lot, all rushing to cut their unwanted leader in establishing all intruders.

The aliens are brutal — literally — not only with weaponry but cash as well. Be



killing them is good for defence and profit as you pick up their dropped coins called Zenites. Collected cash can be put to good use, for example all the destruction, and the ruins a ship still stands where weapons, armour, lives and top-up energy can be bought.

Four adventures become extremely unpleasant as your two warriors penetrate ever further into the enemy's defences, robotic sentries, killer cages (3 organic, looping rooms, stacked up garbage and other debris prove more than a handful without the fastest thousand other aliens flying around.

## Beating the coin-slot

The thoughts in Arc Development's minds when they were given *Forgotten Worlds* to convert are no doubt printable. The first of Capcom's games to use the awesome new generation GP graphics chip, *Forgotten Worlds* sure takes some beating.

When the coin-op was first unleashed on an unsuspecting public, in time-honoured fashion the graphics overwhelmed the single gameplay in much the same way *Afterburner* did.

But recently wonders seem to have been worked with regular occurrence in the coin-op conversion field and *Forgotten Worlds* is the latest to don the 'best conversion yet' mantle — better, in fact, than the original — and it looks to keep it for quite a while to come.

# WORLDS



I'LL FINISH YOU TODAY FOR SURE



Talk of the destroyed town are the awesome behemoth opponents of levels' ends — from the Pleasurium with its rotating garbage clawing at the good guys to the Great Dragon breathing fire. And any who survive his missions must finally face the straight fire, God of Destruction. In all his death-dealing glory, Super warriors only need apply to have the Forgotten Worlds in one frantic battle for supremacy.

If *Forgotten Worlds* is anything to go by, the rest of the Capcom releases look set for unrivalled success — hell, so *Border* and the others!

£9.99

CMS

£14.99 disk

A smaller screen than the others, but the game itself is no less enjoyable. Colour is plentiful supply and detail is all there in one faithful conversion. The lack of between-level title screens can't be helped, but *Forgotten Worlds* rises to the challenge of conversion brilliantly — a great shoot-'em-up with remarkably good graphics to match.

GRAPHICS  
**90%**



£19.99

GRAPHICS  
**94%**

Don't question how they managed to squeeze nearly all the graphics, speech and digitised pictures of one awesome shoot-'em-up into one 120K machine, just play the game! Smooth as silk scrolling goes unmarred when you're up to your armpits in aliens and bullets, all beautifully detailed, with colour galore making *Forgotten Worlds* a 16-bit unbeatable treat.

£8.99

CMS

£12.99 disk

The monochrome backgrounds are cleverly disguised by brightly coloured characters, and although colour slash can reduce the professional sparkle of the game from time to time, the quality parallax scrolling and some superbly detailed sprites just can't be ignored. A very fine Spectrum purchase.

SPECTRUM  
**88%**

## OTHER FORMATS

A PC version is undergoing conversion at this very moment, and planned for August. It will be priced at £19.99.

Center your super Heroes, encounter the party, miss Perseus, while above the divided dragon breathes fire and lightning — *Angels* screens

£9.99

CMS

£14.99 disk

Closely defined graphics always look good in the C64, and together with subtle colouring throughout, the characters are stunning. Sonically *Forgotten Worlds* achieves a high ranking with normally average effects turning out well, enhancing the already very strong atmosphere.

GRAPHICS  
**91%**

£19.99

GRAPHICS  
**92%**

Next to no difference in the graphics stakes with parallax scrolling working all the better on a machine not used to such a technique. Speech and music are competently executed and there's little that can be faulted in the presentation, atmosphere and accuracy of conversion. If you thought *Lod Stone* was good wait until you see *Forgotten Worlds*.

A better style of soccer action

# KICK OFF

Arcade

**A**nura's contribution to a relatively unexplored area of 16-bit gaming, *Kick Off* follows from their ice-hockey simulator, *Face Off*.

To its fans, and despite recent overshadowing from football games, and perhaps football remains a handily deceptive sport, simple in concept, complex in skills requirement and tactics. Computer football games fall broadly into two categories: management sims and arcade-style action games. It's to the latter that Anura have turned their attention, and their attempt offers a variety of features including a new and highly realistic ball control system.

Core to the feature is the ability to keep the ball superglued to a player's feet, even if you go off in the direction ball forward and keep on going. It's up to the player (of course) to direct it (hopefully) forwards.

It's this reworking of traditional computer football ideas that dramatically pushes *Kick Off* a realm to far greater heights than has been achieved before. Have you've REALLY got to work to get the ball in the net.

All this is helped by the presence of a large number of moves including 3-way headers, ball chopping, dribbling and cannon shots literally flying half the length of the pitch. Four types of team formation and five skill levels provide game variety — the higher the team skill level the faster the team moves and the greater its accuracy. On International Level the speed of play is frighteningly fast — the independent skill levels mean an expert can be handicapped when playing against a novice so as to even things out.

Goals, player injuries, red and yellow cards, corners, penalties, throw-ins — they're all there, the only major omission (other than action replay) is a referee. One of its types of net with differing levels



of leniency keeps the match under control (the leniency level otherwise known as the 'blindness' factor). Miss a shot, blowing the timing of a play or a misreading of a pass and the fix is all done without the aid having to walk on.

The great thing about *Kick Off* is that at ALL times you're in total control of your player's

actions. The 'real' control method takes time to grasp but once learnt, the game is as rewarding to play as *MicroProse Soccer*, if not more.

Like real life, goals are hard to come and

As usual with football games, the graphics aren't much to write about and a still frame does no justice, but new moves and fancy footwork in Anura's *Kick Off* make this overhead football strategy game the best 16-bit simulator we've seen so far.

both teams would have to work hard to gain them — screen play is catered for with both sides having independently selected skill levels.

The speed of *Kick Off* is remarkable, beating all before it easily, and with the true concept of fast skills adding a wealth of realism to the game *Kick Off* the best 16-bit soccer simulator yet.

£19.95

**STAR IT**  
**87%**

Unduly in places with up-to-the-minute and basic in-game presentation, *Kick Off* is otherwise impressively impressive with very fast-moving action coupled to full-screen scrolling. At ten pounds (unless Anura would have liked, but some chainstores preferred a higher price) it would have been superb value for money, but it's still a great buy.

**Star Soccer Scoreboard**

Team	W	D	L	GF	GA	Points
1. Arsenal	10	1	1	25	10	21
2. Liverpool	9	2	1	22	12	20
3. Manchester United	8	3	1	20	15	19
4. Tottenham	7	4	1	18	14	18
5. Chelsea	6	5	1	16	13	17
6. Everton	5	6	1	14	12	16
7. Newcastle	4	7	1	12	11	15
8. Aston Villa	3	8	1	10	10	14
9. Derby County	2	9	1	8	9	13
10. Sheffield Wednesday	1	10	1	6	8	12

£19.95

**ARCADIA**  
**87%**

Much the same as the ST game but with the screenline intruding into the pitch. Speed-wise *Kick Off* can't be beaten and is at times frighteningly fast moving — true football skills are needed in every sense of the word.

## OTHER FORMATS

Anura owners can have a game of computer football for the same entrance fee of £19.95, full score.



16-bit burglar nostalgia

# RAFFLES

The Edge

**I**nspired from its previous 16-bit release of Inside Outing, Raffles provides diversion for 16-bit map-enthusiasts. Daily Lord Cloutier hid all his valuables before inconveniently jacking his clocks on the popular vernacular. Even Lady Cloutier couldn't find them, so she's hired you, a thief, into tracking them down for her.

In an isometric 3-D environment, you can peek up or pull virtually any object you find — glasses, chains, plates and so on — in order to reach the grieving widow's diamonds. Your task is hindered by surprisingly dangerous canaries and mutant mice.

Knight Lute-style arcade adventures are rare 16-bit beasts, but Raffles will

*Rambling Raffles runs rampant round rectangular rooms rife with rapid rodents*

£19.99

STAR OF  
65%

The upper-class burglar looks more like a Play School presenter brightly dressed, acting smart and with a swagger of millenary precision. The gold rules are strange, too — they resemble stained-pigs. Still, the rooms and objects enjoy colour and detail, though the graphics aren't as polished as they could be, and one or two good sound effects and a tempered green track take up for an annoying tune.

probably only interest those unfamiliar with the game format or 16-bit owners wanting a tip-down memory lane. Compensatory programmed, it's largely uninteresting to play. Burglary isn't as exciting as you'd expect.

## VERSION UPDATES

Atari ST

Chicago '30s

US GOLD £19.99

Spectrum 80%, Amiga 80% — 100%

Editor Hess is entering the law and the main's out to do him in. Hardly making an 8-bit impact, the ST game follows the Amiga version's line, with somewhat but disappointingly similar graphics and tired game play. Workmanlike production, but a shallow concept.

TOM update: 40%

Atari ST • IBM PC

Battlehawks 1942

US GOLD £24.99

PC 70% — 100%

Much of the graphic style of the PC version is evident within both 16-bit conversions and the new graphics technique works so much the better because of a digital gradient of planes, though updated it looks more realistically, and the



flashes of living, climbing and circling is what it's all about — and it works well.

Overcompression of plane movement really results in the plane appearing still, a more sensitive plane it seems — it's a bit of a bugbear. As only moderate use is made of Amiga and ST graphics, somewhat as needed, especially on the corner. But the tension associated with flying through a hail of flak against appreciable odds is done justice by a Location's programming on the performance score.

TOM update: Atari ST 73%,

Amiga 72%

MSX

Robocop

CCSAY £8.99 box, £14.99 disk

Spectrum 81%, Commodore 80% 71%

100%12, Amiga 76% — 100%17, Atari ST

90%, Amiga 80% — 100%12

It's no big thing to see the same source code used for multiple versions, particularly if the game is as strong a title as Robocop. The Spectrum version in appearance. RoboCop may not please die hard MSX owners, but the absence of colour proves acceptably with speed needing to be kept up. Music is similarly faithful to a conversion of the Spectrum tune. With easily appealing and very satisfying gameplay, RoboCop is a powerful game and futuristic playing at its best.

TOM update: 81%

Commodore 64 violence in favour

# Speedball

Imageworks ■ £9.99 box, £12.99 disk

Amiga 80% — 100%14

The Bump Brothers' violent future football game scored a big 15-18 hit, and this 3-bit version gave a long way to emulating its success. Gameplay and player options remain the same, although set at a slightly lesser difficulty level. A crowd cheer rises up from the floor and first the ball in a random direction. Players run over the ball to pick it up, and points are scored by throwing it into the opponent's goal itself. Time is calculated on their appearance can provide tactics.

protection, increased stamina, automatic possession and so on, or be saved to the end of the match and traded for such graphics as increased stamina, bringing an official or over the referee. The graphics may not take the Amiga's line touch, but

machine  
STAR  
UPDATE

rest assured that the playability is still just as fast, frantic and bloody as ever.

TOM update: 87%



From 15- to 8-bit, the action's as hot

Time to outrun the patrol cars again in...

# THE DUEL - TEST DRIVE II

## Accolade

**Y**eah, you dreamed of owning a Lamborghini, Testarezza or a Porsche 911 Turbo in the original Test Drive, but now Accolade have featured themselves in offering you the chance to buy one of the fastest production cars in existence — the Ferrari F40 and Porsche 959.

First choose which wheel of these dream machines to slide behind (in computer racing mode you also choose the opponent's vehicle). Then decide whether or not to race the computer, or try to beat the clock on some of the most tortuous roads ever designed by a sane man. Whichever mode is chosen, gear changing is one of the most important considerations in this game.

It's a bit ironic the skill level is nothing more than the feeling available ranging from click-on-leaved being automatic transmission mode (interfering with us at TOM) to the real master (you who goes all the way and beats running the grandest (aka Robin 'Ice Man' Hogg). Test Drive II has three different modes: to race along the desert with its hot burning sand, a scary mountain road, don't look over the side of the cliff and a gentle Sunday afternoon dodgems along a pleasant tree-lined country road.

The freeway isn't entirely free to tear-a-way, however, because the cars, vans and police cars have been transferred over from Test Drive to cause you agony and annoyance. The cops are the biggest pain. They have two methods of catch-

ing looters like you. First is to give chase, and it's your decision whether to pull over and get a ticket (not advisable), or cut out the door. Second, you occasionally see a cop standing at the side of the road, again pull over for the ticket or run for it.

At the end of each level you have to pull up at a gas station, but don't over-shoot it because the tank back if you run out of fuel incurs a hefty penalty.

**Fun-Dual —** Test Drive II doesn't add anything special to the racing genre, but who really cares what it's this much fun?



## Life in the fast lane

As in the original, score screens after a section informs on your time, average speed, score etc (and those of the computer player if applicable). Depending on your performance several audio comments are hurled at you by the computer. Five lives are provided at the start, and if you wreck a car or are penalised you lose one, though if you make it to the gas station a life is added. Life in the fast lane is tense, but it's great fun, just like *The Duel-Test Drive II*.

AMIGA  
**82%**

**Price:**  
TBA

Test Drive was let down with sparse graphics, woomy engine noises and doubtful usability. But with three scenarios (a data disk is even available) very impressive cars (also subject to a data disk), and heaps of gameplay, this initially frustrating racing game is one fans of Test Drive shouldn't be without.

## Power in motion

# DARK SIDE

MicroStation ■ Amiga, Atari ST  
(the, probably £24.95)  
System 5.0, Amiga 50+ — 1MB RAM  
Commodore 64 50+ — 1MB RAM, PC 486 — 1MB RAM

The first game to emerge from MicroStation's pen is the most expensive. Dark Side is incentive's chance at breaking the 19-bit market in the States, as well as out here, with MicroProse's marketing muscle.

Speed is relatively up on the PC game and runs like the champion in comparison with the 64-bit. Use the pre-set FPScope game Driver. Dark Side-ups for instant winning, as opposed to the subtle shading of the 64-bit versions. A variety of colours is used extensively yet, together with very smooth-looking animation, the game looks and plays a lot better than the

other versions. Comparisons between ST and Amiga are fruitless, with little more than focused sound effects on the Amiga.

The good news is that the 3-D FPScope world has never looked better and is an ideal purchase for would-be arcade adventures looking for a new angle on this puzzle. If you're fond of arcade adventures that give Dark Side a try, the 3-D environment gives the game a high sense of realism with a great atmosphere. The addition of music would have been nice, but here is without doubt FPScope at its best and best.

**TOM updates:**  
Amiga 87%  
Atari ST 86%  
PC 85%

Power them 8-bit at PC  
exclusive  
Dark Side  
game like the  
others on the  
Amiga

machine  
**STAR  
UPDATE**



Test the wheels and straighten the Test Drive!

# Join The Autobahn Society

**The Power 500: The Porsche 911**  
The latest issue of the Consumer magazine  
The 500 has a winner and your name is on the list.

To see your name there, right now, go to your  
nearest computer.  
**The Deal:** Test Drive 8" disk you placed on  
about the world's fastest production cars.

The Power 500 and the Porsche 911 - nothing else  
makes you go as fast, straight and sideways  
as the 911. And, now, **The Deal: Test Drive 8"**  
disk is on the list. Now, **The Deal: Test Drive 8"**  
disk is now available in many more to see how  
a 200 mph car feels. And, now, you can see how  
it is driving. Now, you can.



Test Drive 8" - when you're done, go back  
to the 500 and look for the 911. It's on the list.  
Testing your car's computer and the 911.  
There are now several of the 911's on the list.  
**The Deal: Test Drive 8"** is available now too.

Available in  
the U.S. - computer, Apple, IBM, and  
other systems.

Coming soon to IBM, Apple, and other systems.  
IBM, Apple, IBM, and other systems.  
IBM, Apple, IBM, and other systems.  
IBM, Apple, IBM, and other systems.  
IBM, Apple, IBM, and other systems.

**ACCOLADE**  
The Best in Entertainment Software  
IBM, Apple, IBM, and other systems.

one step beyond

# ARCHIPELAGOS

Atari Software/Logotron



If you thought Toffids were pretty nasty, you're in for a real shock when you play this island strategy game. The animated plants called Archipelagos trees grow and descend creepily, sending out a deadly virus towards you.

So is described Archipelagos, a combination of The Sentinel and Virus but far more surreal. The land beyond our dreams is made up of many islands whose size is not in a firm as we know it. Floating in mid-air you take on the physical form of the explorer of the 9999 islands.

In the world of Archipelagos the obelisk reigns supreme. Like the Sentinel of stone paths, the obelisk is the focal point for all the energy of the land and at all times the ultimate foe. The obelisk feeds off the very land itself and is kept alive through stones scattered around the metaphysical land.

To defeat the ruling levitation all the stones around the island must first be absorbed — it is The Sentinel. This is said to be done when situated on lower levels but with the advent of the higher levels stones on separate islands need to be connected up to form a chain.

Once all stones are destroyed a timer ticks down and the obelisk is now vulnerable — just move to the black monument and absorb it to complete the level before time runs out otherwise the obelisk kills you.

The trees around the island are deadly, as they live and fall they literally advance towards you step by step. The virus they spread is lethal to walk over, so too are the trees if they catch you. Bouncing on the move is the key to survival. But and the speed needed to absorb stones before the trees spread their virus everywhere.

The islands are viewed in the familiar 3-D form with a cursor used to point to objects around the world and either move to them or destroy them. Movement around the land is far much of the time an un-

dered process, water forms a barrier between islands, which can be bridged by creating land — creating land costs energy, but to replenish lost energy island flowers can be collected.

This is an easy enough concept to grasp but with the many new levels come interesting obstacles, the Necromancer and Blood Eggs appearing both the deadly virus in a lethal fountain. The Last Souls of past explorers also wander aimlessly around the island.

The landscape gradually becomes more convoluted as the explorer moves into new areas, with lots needing to be reached by creating causeways. With limited energy and time, things can get very tight later on. Success on the first few levels may be easy but death on the later levels is easier said.

With every little level (for the first hundred levels why) the landscape changes to a more familiar island shape (look out for the East-Island map, the pig and the wheel early on). Like The Sentinel, the weird nature of the game lends the strange appeal and enhances an already surreal atmosphere. Even this means the game's weird but compelling appeal. Things start off easy but as you move from slow-moving trees to avoid but the later levels are where the challenge lies, making The Sentinel look



Mapping Aurores; quite a few of the archipelagos can look familiar

simply in comparison.

Archipelagos is a competitive game containing some highly-compelling and very abstract elements. One to grow into.

LEARN  
90%

£24.95

Slightly faster movement is unnecessary with this type of game but appreciated nonetheless. Graphically no change but with an atmosphere this game is deadly! Good heavily subtle animated, masterpiece graphics. Play this game in a dark room and become totally immersed in the world of Archipelagos, a game which makes The Sentinel look like a non-starter.

LEARN  
90%

£24.95

The animation of movement around the island may not be as smooth as Think Jets but you don't need to be fast on your feet to play Archipelagos, just plan where you go carefully! The surreal landscape weaves an odd spell in its creation of atmosphere, elements of levitation and fear quickly emerge as the deadly stones near with you always in their sights.

## OTHER FORMATS

A PC version is nearing completion. Watch out for an Update soon.



PC

## Echelon

US GOLD F1445

Commodore 64 1PC... 100k/12

Echelon is an anti piracy organization set up by the International Space Federation. You start seated in a C-134 Tomahawk equipped with the latest computerized equipment specially built to destroy the scoundrels. This is done by locating the pirate base and disabling its docking device, information on how to do this is scarce so robots scattered around the playing area must be reported aboard in the hope that certain clues. Echelon is a longworded which could send boring iterations to sleep over the 70-page operations manual. But nonetheless under the eye-sch improves the situation a little, as does preview.

TGM Update 61%

COMODORE 64/128 AMSTRAD CPC

## Dark Fusion

ORIGAMI GRAPHICS 12.99-14.99

11455 disk

Amstrad 128 — 100k/12



No surprise for the remaining 8-bit versions of Dark Fusion (Amstrad CPC version pictured above), with its mixture of several games. Playability is high, although as with the Spectrum version, the difficulty level has been set on the high side etc. and it takes many games to destroy the alien warships on each the first level. Colourful, blazing fun with a carry choice of inspiration for the combined game elements used.

TGM update: CPC 74%

Commodore 64/128 72%

PC

## Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon

CAEMARAL MICROSOFT 129.99

Also 120 ST 128L, 1240 ST 128L, 1244 ST1L 128k/12

A right pain to play on the Amstrad 520 C7 in juggling disks every few seconds became commonplace. It's better news for PC owners with only two disks which don't have to be swapped too often. Two slight niggles though: the key functions are a little sluggish (especially on the showpiece sub-game), and Commodore don't appear to know the difference between a Centaur and a minotaur. Oh well.

TGM Update 66%



The overly effective graphics are very similar in both versions (Amiga above, Amstrad 520 photo below and under the title)



A case of the genes being too tight

# BIO CHALLENGE

Palen/Delphine

**T**he principles of evolution and civilization state that the human mind and body increases in sophistication and efficiency as the centuries go by. Presumably Delphine Software have more alarming ideas about mankind's future. Successive generations will have weaker genes, composing an ever-more puny physical being, so that eventually man will be too feeble a creature to exist.

A solution may be found by scientists, but at the time this game is set, biologists and physiologists have failed to stop the downward spiral. However, the human race still lives. A method of interfusing a brain with a robot has been developed so that people may live in metal bodies. But the mind-to-mechanism device has not been fully tested.

The player of the Challenge is a KLIPP — the lowest and most complex of androids, now under guidance, that is, human brain. The first task is divided into six levels, each divided into between one and six worlds. The basic aim for each is to collect four pieces of an android within a time limit, using floating teleport devices to jump from world to world. The job is complicated by small drone craft which fly past in groups, but these are easily destroyed with the KLIPP's rapid spin move. Making contact with these, or any enemy, though, causes a loss in the KLIPP's life fluid — oil.

Much more difficult to eliminate but vital to progress are Guardians' Creatures. These traverse the ground of the swirling vortex, below Orange (flats) platforms. The flats can have one, two, three or infinite charges on them. A charge is used up by jumping onto the flat then disconnecting on it, or by jumping upwards to hit its edge, which also has the effect of breaking the flat sideways. When a flat has no



Out at a strong KLIPP for a breath of fresh air — unusual graphics from the ST game (both screens)

charge, it falls to the ground, hopefully to hit and destroy a Creature.

Android creatures always leave behind an object, a piece of armor or their energy tanks. The energy capsules are needed for the end of the level, but as only four energy capsules can be carried at once they can be stored in a large sphere at the beginning of the level.

Creatures sometimes reuse the summing-up of a creature. These appear at set positions along a level, and give bonuses

according to their colour (see box).

Once all four pieces of armor have been collected, it's a run, jump and a spin to the large sphere where the deposited energy is collected. This is needed to tackle the Guardian (aka the 'big and-d-level nasty'), who lurks underground. Here the KLIPP can transform into a flying cannon and use the previously gathered energy capsules to fire bullets at the monster.

It's strange that the only blasting in the game is at the point — the scenario and landscape style is one that most programmers would use for a gun-toting android shoot-'em-up, or perhaps a progressive beat-'em-up. The rapid spin method of despatching the flat guys is unusual, and when combined with the use of energy flats, makes for intriguing gameplay. Being able to move flats (and often having to) requires thought and some skill and strategy, particularly as the Guardian's Creatures change movement patterns from level to level.

So Challenge's gameplay is a breath of fresh air, both original and fun. 10-15 minutes long for a challenge can find it here.

## THE CAULDRONS

**Yellow cauldron:** extra time (one minute)

**Green cauldron:** 2000 bonus points

**Green cauldron:** green amount — smart bonus effect

**Blue cauldron:** extra life

**Blue cauldron:** expands all tanks to 50 units

**Red cauldron:** red amount — increased spin speed

£24.99

77%

Graphics are similar to the ST's, but appear to be expert sideways a little, and definition, perhaps partly because of this, is sharper. Music is very good, though, with unusual samples composed within a lively and futuristic melody.



£19.99

77%

Real introductory sequences show a metallic skull spool over a fallen human and a speaking face transform. Try-like, into a robot's featureless mask. In the game, the KLIPP is compactly designed and very well animated. It's odd that the robot's movement reminds us of Tyson Thompson, because the sound effects are very similar in style to that highly playable release, although the music is an improvement. Spriting is smooth and backgrounds lack great detail but are nevertheless atmospheric.

## OTHER FORMATS

It is unlikely that any other versions of Bio Challenge will be produced.

Cunning stunts for another fall guy

## DANGER FREAK

US Gold



**I**f you remember Colin Sweeney... The Fat Guy, Lee Majors in his breezy leather jacket biting the bad guys and performing all those seemingly impossible stunts. Perhaps you also remember him converting him into an old 8-bit game. No? In which case you might find the Rainbow Artus: Good release refreshingly original.

The aim of the game is to complete three levels and emerge at the end in one piece (if you don't do this the movie director will send your earnings to your next of kin).

Level 1 sees you astride a large and powerful motorcycle. These factors are against you as you zoom off down the road, an enemy level slowly deploys when you hit objects or stray from the roads centre. An inevitable timer ticks down the seconds left to complete the level, and finally each time a particular stunt fails the director calls a 'fail'. These obviously cost money so an allowance of eight are made, and on the eighth such offence you're deep-sixed (removed).

Next it's into a sports car driven by a beautiful young lady — but no real listen to the sound of motor blades... Yes that's the idea — climb onto the car's roof and grab hold of the rope ladders before the car crashes into that brick wall that's looming up (don't worry about the girl, she's a stunt person too).

In the second section, on a jet bike, you go skid across the runway, but logs, barrels, and the occasional nasty jumbo-junk truck can threaten your chances of fame and fortune.

The final level takes place in the clouds where, under a ratty goggles flying helmet you have to gooo billions (we haven't yet worked out why), avoid bio-flying eagles and fire-breathing dragons.

The idea behind *Danger Freak* is neat, but in practice the combination of tough opponents, annoyingly-placed objects and tricky vehicle control conspires to keep you on the fast lane indefinitely. Once the first level has been completed a frustratingly playable game emerges, the only question is how long will *Danger Freak* hold your attention.

**Amiga 68%**  
Price TBA

Despite the obvious graphic and sonic differences, playability is similar to the OS's. Rainbow Arts have come up with some great games. Contests reviewed TQM (87) for example, and luckily they haven't damaged their reputation too much with *Danger Freak*. But still, try before you buy.



Starting astride your C64 bike

**Amiga 65%**  
£9.99 cassette  
£14.99 disk

The small blocky looking sprites on first sighting don't bode well for this game and tricky controls also give you a vaguely unsettled feeling, but it must be said that after a while *Danger Freak* does tend grow on you, so short-term playability is assured.

## OTHER FORMATS

Work on PC and Atari ST versions are under way, more news when we receive it.

Amiga ■ Atari ST ■ Astron CPC

## Pac-Land

GrandSlam 16-bit C64SS, CPC  
£8.95 cass, £14.95 disk  
£24.95 — 1 year

The world's most successful video game character may well have left Atari's conversions for this, his second official 16-bit outing. The ST's superior scrolling has been transformed into the Amiga, which won't go down well in the Amiga camp and should have been restricted to start with on the ST. It doesn't spoil gameplay, but it doesn't help the game's appearance. Both 16-bit versions look remarkably similar, with neither machine given the chance to show off. Pac bonuses along with a little less vigor than the arcade character, and collect are generally outstated in their usage, but at least most of the



Amiga's Pac: Scouring for good-looking in Pac-Land

bonus is still present.

Like its C64 counterpart, the Amiga's game has a noticeable lack of scrolling, but with colour at least it looks very much alive. Not so bad if corner work, things could have looked so much better with successful scrolling.

TQM updated Amiga 81%

Atari ST 83%

Amiga CPC 66%

Commodore 64/128

## Xenon

Millions House £19.95 cass,  
£14.95 disk

Atari ST 88%, Amiga 88% — 100000,  
Atari CPC 88% — 100000

One of the first Amiga boardwalk-style games, *Xenon* was something of a novelty in its 16-bit format, and the 6-bit conversions have managed to match their looks quite well. The Commodore version lags quite a bit, of course, then the Spectrum. As with the other versions, the aliens are a tough bunch to destroy, leaving you on the fast lane for a while, but some of the 16-bit playability has been lost.

TQM Update 82%



Can American TV shows get any worse...?

# THE RUNNING MAN

Grand slam

**I**n 1976, Ben Richards is a young police officer on street control duty in downtown Manchester. But when the order comes through for all units to clear the lot of a group of unwanted protesters, Ben refuses to cooperate and is arrested himself.

Faced with the choice of spending a long time in prison or appearing prime time TV's *The Running Man* — a favourite show where innocent people are dubbed criminals and hunted by bloodthirsty himself for the enjoyment of the crowds — Ben

possibly and so plenty of ammo faces Ben as he fights his way to Killen the TV station's ruthless boss. The action takes place over a horrendously scrolling parallel screen filled with platforms, head-knocking obstacles, dogs which have to be kicked (and make a whimpering sound when you do), and of course the stalkers — the mean mothers who enjoy nothing more than bringing a little pain and misery into the unfortunate victim's life.

As Ben is beaten, battered and generally knocked around his energy level drops, but weapons can be picked up along the way to return some of the tender loving care, and some energy's restored by boosting the muffs, although it's better to wait until a level's end and advance full strength is regained if you successfully complete a puzzle sub-game.

Two circles appear on screen, each with eight smaller circles set in them, rather like a telephone dial. One of these smaller circles and the idea is to match the left-hand dial icons with those on the right. A minute is given only to complete the puzzle, with ten seconds subtracted on each successive level.

*The Running Man* boasts great music



shoots the other.

Ben's dubbed 'The Butcher Of Manchester' and thrown right into the centre of the proceedings as the grinning host man says 'IT'S SHOWTIME!'

In *The Running Man*'s live levels the audience want blood (the contestants' if



The screaming TV audience (above) wait for the action to begin — which it does (below)

and a brilliant digitised animated start sequence, but the gameplay says. Largely to blame is the control of the bulky character (Schweissenegger? Doesn't look much like him...), which is terrible. Much of the time is spent vainly wiggling the stick trying to gain the movement you require.

**UPPER**  
**53%**

£24.95

The old saying (paraphrasing), pretty graphics do not necessarily a great game makes certainly applies here. The makings of a good game are there, but they have been spoiled by frustrating gameplay and poor control.

## OTHER FORMATS

Spectrum (£8.95 tape, £12.95 disk), Amstrad CPC and Commodore 64 (£24.95 disk), £24.95 disk), Atari ST and PC (£24.95) versions are to follow rapidly. If the control problems experienced in the Amiga version are improved, it's likely *The Running Man* will turn out a better 8-bit game.



speaking out from their Commodore 64 roots, Thaisoft have converted their first ever game — an original creation by Carlos Falcas. Always growing concerned over the technological advances of the human race dubbed with the 'Star Wars' 504 programme in an attempt to start World War II, a careless pilot crashing near the North Pole set up the plot and gave rise to Operation Sanxion.

Travelling lightward in a laser-equipped ship through scrolling levels, a plan view of the action adds, as a simple radar system, giving a little advanced warning of approaching attack waves. Occasionally a 'P' can be picked up to gain increased

Boogie again to an old fave from another universe

# SANXION — THE SPECTRUM REMIX

Thaisoft

ammunition — very useful for the end-of-level bombardment of alien craft. This is very useful at any time in the game, in fact, as is the 'Very Bloody Difficult' remix, is our opinion! The C64 original was a sticky shoot-'em-up, but in the Spectrum version rocket ships speed relentlessly toward your flying pea-shooter and fire with frightening accuracy. And once screen space has been taken up by the radar and status panel, there isn't much room to manoeuvre — lives drop like flies.

A quality shoot-'em-up, but one for the

toughened gamer/player, the very patient or for masochists.

**SPECTRUM**  
**75%**

£8.99

£22.95 disk

In the redesign, the Sanxion ship feels like making motion, but otherwise the graphics are a corrected mono-chrome translation of their detailed C64 advice. Scrolling is smooth and the 1986 music is a fair rendition of Hubbard's acclaimed piece.

This Commodore 64 version of *Sanxion* is now on Newson's Rack-It label, priced £2.95.



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2007-2008 2007-2008 2007-2008  
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The game can be played at 1 of 3 levels of difficulty and is a must for players of the *Call of Duty* series.

2000 24.13M 2000 204.49M  
 2000 PC 2000 117.75M  
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Thanatopian accountancy's plain boring, so it's time for some...

# BLOOD MONEY

Paygrots

**A** negative frames of animation on the budget are not easily ignored. *Blood Money* is a game that shines with the talent and taste of Paygrots's superlative presentation. The opening sequence has inveterately tumbling asteroids and excellent music including *Loosemoney* samples. There's no way a game can live up to such a great intro...but *Blood Money* does.

The scenario features Allen Sabet Promotions, the supremely dull concept of future holidaymakers going on a shoot-'em-up tour of four alien planets where the average life expectancy is a couple of seconds. You're the casually brutal son Sporebula, a teenager studying accountancy on Thanatopia 32 and just about to blow your parents' money on said Sabet.

200 credits gives you a choice of two of the four planets to visit. Planet one is explored by helicopter, and is largely mechanical with gun turrets, rockets, rocket cars and so on. Planet two is completely different, requiring a submarine to blast through jellyfish, crabs and enemy subs. Complete these levels with enough cash and you can go on to planet three — an icy planet with icecans you zoom over in a jet-pack equipped spacesuit — or planet four, blood-and-guts time with you in a spaceship.

The graphic style of the levels are completely different, and utterly impressive. To start off with the scenery scrolls horizontally, but occasionally it switches to vertical — which can be embarrassing if you're hugging the roof at the time!

At certain places in the worlds there's equipment lockers, pop inside one and you get a choice of various add-ons. They all cost money of course, which is earned by shooting aliens and collecting the coins they drop. Products are in short supply, so



Impassioned, irrepressible and utterly playable, *Blood Money* is an instant design winner.



If two are playing it's a race to get the last Neural Bomb in stock.

Add-ons include spread or damaged firing missiles, war-firing missiles, long-range missiles, bombs, speed-ups, extra energy and extra life. Needless to say all are needed, because this is one tough blast-'em-up.

Programmer David Jones's previous game was the original, but nevertheless highly enjoyable shoot-'em-up *Moonbase Blood Money* is tougher, better looking, more inventive and even more playable. In one-player mode it's great, in two it's incredible fun with players either rushing to grab coins and add-ons or, more sensibly, providing each other with covering fire. The

only slight drawback is the price — £24.95 is a lot for a shoot-'em-up even if it is probably the best around.

## OTHER FORMATS

Work is progressing on an Atari ST version, but Paygrots say that they are working to like full capacity of the Amiga these days, rather than just make games which are suitable to both machines, so there may be some general differences between the versions — we wait to see.

£24.95

SAVE  
90%

David Jones's programming has produced time and power for lots of fully animated enemies, and *Blood Money* has certainly made use of it with consistently top-notch aliens and great backgrounds too. Even if gameplay were not so addictive, trying to see yet more of the graphics would keep you playing long into the night. Sound is excellent, there's a top quality intro track, and good in-game music or sound FX. The perfectly smooth and apparently effortless way everything moves, even in two-player mode, is a delight.

Kick sand California-style

# KINGS OF THE BEACH

Electronic Arts

**E**xtending in their recent health kick, you had to be fit to *State of War*. Electronic Arts bring us another all-American sport called Beach volleyball. The first task is to head for the registration tent — you can't miss it, it's a dilly-dilly tent in the centre of the court.

Here a leggy Californian beauty, almost wearing a bikini, greets you and asks

whether you want to play either Handy Hobbies or Super Smash (not exactly prepossession names, but what the hell — this is California).

There are two playing modes: cooperative and competitive. In two-player mode cooperative means both players are on the same side. Now set the difficulty level, turn the sound on or off, enter a password (if you have won a Tournament) and return to

\$24.95

 PC  
**78%**

Kings of the Beach is great fun, once the practice courts have been visited a few times (the first few attempts usually end with you collecting a handful of sand). The game is very colourful and contains some amusing attention to detail such as players brushing the sand off themselves after taking falls, or venting frustration by kicking the sand in someone's face. And, for this country at least, Kings of the Beach introduces us to an unfamiliar outdoor sport.

the beach.

Practice courts have been thoughtfully provided allowing volleyball skills to be honed. Bumps (a defensive move where, with hands clasped, the forearms are used to deflect the ball as it rockets over the net and is about to hit the sand), sets (position the ball near to the net) and spikes (a punch with clenched fists to send the ball fast into the opposing court) can all be performed until a computer-controlled opponent until you feel confident enough to tackle either a match or a tournament.

In matches — usually the best to start with — after two games the winner takes all. You're presented with a court comprising a net, referee perched on top of a skyscraper at a chair and four players (two on each team). The first team to score 15 points is declared winner.

Tournaments require three wins in order to move to the next beach, which may be in Rio, or Hawaii, or a number of exotic locations where you can show off your prowess and impose the volley dollops.



Much improved future chariot racing

## POWERDROME

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga ■ £24.95  
Ave 37 50% — 1.00000

Chariot racing of the future was first depicted on the ST. Michael Powell took note of the criticism of the first version very little we would have thought and amazingly he's improved on the game. The Amiga game is a tad faster and it's a much easier to get into, with the control method tweaked slightly so you can get to grips quickly with Typhoon flying.

John said 3-D graphics, there's little low-way for graphic diversity between 16-bit versions. Powerdrome is no exception to this hard and fast rule, although the sound is all the better through the Amiga's stereo capabilities. An HD3D-tek is also available for further 3D humanoids.

The element of racing of break-neck speed around a twisting, turning and often very fast-paced racetrack would make for a superb game in its own right. With a comprehensive craft customisation screen, a demanding on-going challenge, speed to keep the pace very much alive, all

 machine  
 STAR  
 UPDATE

unbeatable fusion of movement and long term appeal. Powerdrome is the ultimate future racing game. There's one roller-coaster ride after another as the Typhoons give no quarter in one vicious race around equally vicious courses. Holding onto your stomach has never been so much fun.

TSM update 9-9-93





Costa Parani strikes back with hate

# HOSTILE ALL TERRAIN ENCOUNTER

Gremlin Graphics

There's more trouble brewing at Tasty Way, plans warning on stalked, threatening genocide, you know the sort of thing. That's why you're at the Galactic Free Training Centre wanting to become a combat pilot. Trainers are given control of two vehicles: a star fighter and a ground assault vehicle — and Lord help anyone who crosses their path.

The first thing to distinguish HATE from other current shoot-'em-ups is its welcome return to the three-quarter view 3-D format exemplified by *Demol*. You start in the star fighter with four lives and 30 levels of grinding action ahead of you. Many obstacles lie in your path, both mobile and stationary. These include ground-planning projectiles, mine barriers, intelligent missiles and enemy star ships.

The aim of each section, apart from dodging missiles and negotiating the billy terrain, is to collect scattered plasma cells, which have two functions: to act as



The familiar graphics routines of Costa Parani's old the Spectrum

lives (if you end a level with two cells, you have two lives for the next) and as fuel for the vehicle you control on the next section. It follows that it's essential to end a section with at least one cell in tow or lose a life. The plasma cells are protected by a tough shell which has to be shot several times before the cell is freed.

HATE is by veteran Spectrum programmer Costa Parani of Vortex — remember names like *Andromed*, *I and A*, *FL* and especially *Highway Encounter*. In some ways HATE reminds us a little of the latter in both its graphics and playability. The going is tough, but if you persevere the sheer pulse-pounding action as the alien hordes swirl around you soon drags you in. Long-term playability may be more doubtful.



With its greater colour capability, the ST version of HATE looks as though it is going to be something special for action fans.

## VERSION UPDATES

COMMODORE 64/128 ■ AMSTRAD CPC ■ AMIGA

### The Real Ghostbusters

ACTIVISION 2-60 0249 cassette, £74.99 disk, Amiga £24.99 Spectrum £14.99 — Vortex

In descending order of quality: it's strange that although *Real Ghostbusters* is much older than *Real Ghostbusters*, the music on this latest Activision licence is notably worse, though still lively (as are the sound effects). Smooth scrolling backgrounds are glaring and spotted, while targets are generally small and indistinct, not helped by black cutting. Quite a playable Commodore variant.

The colour scheme is dim green and orange all the while — not exactly attractive — and scrolling is jerky, but characters have the same well drawn detail of the Spectrum. Effects are standard Activision but the music is jolly.

Detail of the Amiga pre-game scene, where Ecto-1 drives up in front of a haunted house, looks well. But one



Amiga ghostbusting for real

look of the character sprites inside the house. Looking in detail, the whole pretty (two frames of animation) and rapidly, and is matched in low quality by the wandering monsters. *Slimer* is a particular example of the slipshod definition. *Real Ghostbusters* are drawn in bad perspective. Music and effects are not bad, like the game, nothing special.

#### TGM updates:

Commodore 64/128 70%

Amstrad CPC 74%

Amiga 57%

#### MSX

##### Airball

MICROBALL 2-1285

MSX 2-1285 — TMS202

We've waited rather a long time for the Amiga *Airball*, though allow you credit as there's no real differences between this and the very attractive *Am ST* version. The reality eventually had a tough to control at first, but practice soon reveals a playable arcade puzzle game.

#### TGM updates: 80%



£29.99  
cass  
£24.99 disk

**SPECTRUM 80%**

Wild entertainment may be full when you are sent back a level once you do from Level 5 onwards, but at least this is better than a targetted misadventure. The more graphics inevitably cause no colour clash, though they do cause some spatial confusion at times, making alone a pain to get past.

#### OTHER FORMATS

Commodore 64/128 and Amstrad versions at £29.99 cassette and £24.99 disk, ST and Amiga at £24.99 should be available in early May. The ST graphics look particularly great.



# MILLENNIUM 2.2

Electric Dreams

**T**he first release for the new, original steel-only Electric Dreams label has been heralded as a software classic to rank with Elite and Dungeon Master. Players have, apparently, played for 30 hours or so without completing this epic space adventure...

The game begins in 2250, a 20 billion some oddness has slammed into the Earth with an environmental impact which would give Genghis Khan a collective heart attack. If the shockwaves, hurricane-force winds and molten rock hadn't already killed every one on Earth. The only humans left are the few hundred living on bases on the Moon and Mars. You're the commander of Moon Base and it's your responsibility to ensure the survival of the human race. To do this you must first expand Moon Base, then colonise other planets and moons with the ultimate aim of re-establishing life on Earth.

Initially your task seems extremely daunting. Moon Base has just 100 people in seven, interlinked domes. The most important dome is obviously Life Support, and be staying on it if you can revise the population status. But this is purely a report screen, the decisions which affect it are taken elsewhere. The Energy dome, for example, initially uses batteries, and it these run out...

Fortunately there's a Solarium (Solar Power Generator) bit. I turn it on and you get power to activate the Reactors, or mining dome. The reactors produced here can be used in the Production dome to make more powerful Solarium, as well as probes, spaceships, orbital lasers and so forth. Construction can't start, however, until plans have been produced by the Research dome. Click on this and you can choose to research all sorts of hardware, as well as planets for colonisation. Only one project at a time can be undertaken, and to research planets you must first land a probe on them.

Probes, and most of the other spaceships are launched by the Hanger dome where you can load or unload cargo, crew ships and even scrap them. Once a spaceship is launched into lunar orbit you can choose to send it to any of the Solar System's planets or moons... and there's a bit, most a very long way away. A trip to Pluto takes several hundred days... so it's as well that beside a disk save option,

complex it may sound, rather simple and easy. The save-control system is excellent and soon becomes second nature. The first real problem is obtaining minerals which aren't available on the Moon; the solution isn't immediately apparent but once solved a routine task involves of shipping the materials home which is a bit tedious.

Yet gameplay is always compelling because, in addition to the basic strategic/casual elements, there's a big adventure element - power plants blow up, computers mutate and so on. Living long enough to see what the next surprise will be is one of the most addictive part of the game. Unfortunately these adventure elements hardly vary from game to game, so



there's an accelerate time feature (you can click on this repeatedly, and if something happens a notice flashes up).

In all your exploration you inevitably encounter an enemy who launches powerful attacks against your base(s). Defence can either be by automatic orbital lasers or fighters. Launch a fighter and you're presented with a pilot's perspective of battle, with a solid 3-D enemy fighter whirling around you. It's simple, but fast, and an enjoyable break from all the strategic thinking.

To be honest basic gameplay is, however



machine

STAR  
PLAYER

Superlatively atmospheric space graphics bring a touch of Stanley Kubrick's vision to the ST

even completed (15-20 hours if you don't want a top score) there's little incentive to play again and it is a bit easy. Nevertheless, Millennium 2.2 is one of the most mesmerising games available, offering the depth of a classic SF adventure without any of the mindless hassles highly recommended.

STAR IT  
87%

£19.99

Atmospheric sound effects, superbly rendered static screens and a great look system add up to one of the best presented strategic/adventure games around. Played late at night you get a great feeling of 'being there', and you can even blast enemy spacecraft in a fun arcade section. A true 16-bit game.

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# MIXING Business

WITH L, E, I, S, U, R, E,

WILL BE A REAL EDUCATION

## Commodore computer show

Britain's brightest event for Commodore computer users is back! And there's more to see than ever before.

This show has three main themes covering some of the major uses for which Commodore machines are put. There are over 70 key companies who will be exhibiting their latest products, which means that just about everything that's new in the Commodore world will be on show!

### Business

Many companies will be demonstrating their latest software and hardware, specially designed to realise the full business potential of Commodore computers.

As well as products for the OSA and Amiga series, you'll be able to try out applications for the processing/Commodore PC compatible micros.

And you'll also be able to attend seminars covering all aspects of using Commodore micros in your business.

### Leisure

The OSA and Amiga computers are the most powerful 16- and 32-bit machines for producing fast-action arcade quality games. The range of new software on show

Novotel Exhibition Complex,  
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will demonstrate how these machines' power is continuously being stretched, producing faster and even more addictive games with superb graphics.

If you're a keen game player, you'll find there's so much to offer at the show you're guaranteed a real treat!

### Education

Commodore micros are now used as educational tools all over the country. With the development of BBC Basic on the Amiga, and the advent of Desktop Notes (combining TV pictures with text and graphics), the range of educational applications is endless.

At the show you'll see how the latest software

packages are making real breakthroughs in the educational sector, and be able to try them out for yourself.

### Special Events

As well as special events and presentations, you'll also be able to meet some of your favourite celebrities, and maybe get a chance to talk with them about how they use micros in their work.

So for a great day out, whether you want to see what the future holds for Commodore computers, to buy the latest software or to get advice on specific applications, the Commodore show is the place to go. And if you want to see the biggest bargains, we'll knock £1 off the price of each ticket!

For the first time we are offering a family ticket for just £11 allowing entry for two adults and two children - saving up to £7 off the usual entry price!

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Originally designed in 1978 as musical comedy called *The Krystal of Kloros*, despite Game Page recording some of its songs it never actually made it onto the stage. For a long while thereafter the project remained in limbo, but then 16-bit machines arrived and the computer game was started.

Unlike most computer versions of films or plays, *The Krystal* is an uncompromising attempt to replicate the plot of the original rather than merely dressing up a standard arcade adventure with some new sprites. As a result *The Krystal* comes on four double-sided disks.

The story unsurprisingly revolves around the *Krystal of Kloros*, a mystical object once contained within the Halls of Love. Acting under the influence of the incredibly evil Ono, the war-mad Malagar stole the *Krystal*, causing the Halls to collapse as he escaped. Needless to say this didn't please the Halls' oldest residents, the Essence, which promptly destroyed Malagar's ship and took the *Krystal* back.

To prevent a recurrence of the previous incident the Essence hid the *Krystal* in a secret chamber that only the pure of heart could enter.

One such insufferably pure person is Darius Fries, whose role you take after a 30-second intro by Patrick Moore. The game takes place over ten different planetary systems, with around 50 characters with which to interact. Talking with people is via text input, and the parser is surprisingly good, even allowing you to make improper suggestions in the various busy cafes — with unexpected consequences.

But if interaction fails it's time for combat, with an impressively animated lot of sword-play to engage in. Survive that and you can travel to other planets via 17th century galleons propelled by solar 'hot stars' at the helm, ready with the cannon, to blast such potential attackers as winged space ferrets.

Needless to say the tongue-in-cheek humour of the original stage script has been retained to give *The Krystal* a consistently amusing touch, which adds further polish to its superb presentation. Of course many a game attempts to get by on good graphics alone, particularly on the Amiga, but *The Krystal* isn't one of them. The problems you face are numerous and fairly complex, but as yet we haven't encountered anything irritatingly obscure.

In addition the characters and objects are always moving around, reducing the prob-

Moore than your average arcade adventure

# THE KRISTAL

Addictive Games

lem of repetition. So if you fancy your chances as a swashbuckling space hero in an epic space fantasy, this is the one for you. With such a high level of presentation, and superbly involved gameplay, a £29 price tag seems completely justified for once.



*The Krystal* is an uncompromising attempt to replicate the plot of the original stage musical rather than merely dressing-up a standard arcade adventure with some new sprites — and it shows in the graphics.



## OTHER VERSIONS

An ST version is due early next, while a PC version making best use of VGA, VGA and VGA is a bit further off, but all versions will be the same price: £29.99.



£29.99

Without doubt this is one of the best presented games available, comparable to anything Cinemascore have done. There's a great sampled speech by Patrick Moore to start things off, good spot FX and a haunting title tune as well. Graphics are even better with impressively animated sprites set against startlingly beautiful backdrops which you can fully explore. The complexity of gameplay, with some attractive subgames, make this one of the best arcade adventures ever.

Kicking the bellow out of innocent creatures

# GRAND MONSTER SLAM

Golden Bobble/Rainbow Arts

**H**oddi Owinggaard, the largest in the world of Ghouls, is the setting of this fantastic fantasy future sport. The time represented in the game is the year 12847, but the history of the game's Grand Monster Slam goes way back to 10000, when goblins were at war with humans.

A siege on a desert fortress soon came to a halt when the goblins ran out of ammunition for their giant catapults, and had to be literally smothered they could lay their hands on at the stone walls. The soldiers (including the fortress retainer) by throwing back the goblins' stones, giving them back their ammunition supply.

Three years later, the two races had lost the will for war, made peace and (almost) became friends. In memory of the war, they decided to meet every three years to hold a festival during which they would have a friendly commensurate catapult fight. Other races became involved in the tri-annual competition, qualifying for the honour by declaring war on the goblins and humans then rapidly making peace (often about five minutes after commencing bloodshed). Soon all intelligent forms of life on Ghoul had heard of the contest and most were a part of its festivities.

Through time, it became a refined one-on-one knockout (sometimes friendly) sport. Catapults were rejected in favour of good old fashioned arm power and the

unlucky bellow, small furry creatures, became the arena. Their part in the games became more uncomfortable still when it was decided they should be kicked at the opposition rather than thrown.

You take the soldier part in the latest change in the sport now named Grand Monster Slam, performing in the boots of a dwarf, the first time a member of their race has competed. You face one of the other seven participants of League One of 12847's championship.

In all matches, you are shown at the bottom of the screen, standing at your baseline with six bellow spread in front of you. These are kicked up the pitch in one of three directions, and at a strength determined by the fire button. The main aim is to kick all your bellow (pivot for bellow) away

from your baseline so that none remain, then sprint across the pitch to the opposition's baseline to win the game. Naturally, he/she/it will be trying to do the same, so you must move fast to stop the bellow mounting up. Knocking the opponent down with a well-aimed bellow gives you some time to catch up, or hopefully win.

Kicking a bellow into the audience involves a penalty. After choosing a direction to jump, a duck-like creature is kicked



The world of Hoddi Owinggaard and its strange creatures comes to life in this quirky game

**£19.99**

**76%**

A triumphant medieval tune begins the game. The great composition and quality sounds it uses set the high standard of the sound track, which is rounded off by samples of crowd and grunting players. The graphics match this standard: detailed, colourful and well animated sprites and equally well drawn profile portraits. Each competitor has his/her/its own character, particularly the bellow (the stars of the show), who quake in fear or all haughty and petulant, depending on your proximity. Strange creatures, indeed.

Tanks, but I'll forget it

# ABRAMS BATTLE TANK

Electronic Arts

**G**rab your fighting gear and be prepared to take battle in the most advanced tank in its class. EA are inviting all tanks to show the best out of those Red Russians once more, this time in a Dynamics-designed

game. EA's latest simulation plunges you into the action, drama and exhilaration (7) of a conventional Third World War. Controlling an M61 tank, it's your duty as commander to take on the might of the Soviet Army through eight separate missions, in a desperate battle for survival and victory.

Joystick and keyboard driven, you have overall control of the vehicle. Be it driving, controlling the gun turret, firing or navigation. This theatre of war is set in West Germany — and there are plenty of actors. But with skill, stamina and the strength of possibly the world's best military attack vehicle, you could survive, and who knows, deter the unthinkable — a full nuclear attack.

Well, you could do, had Abrams Battle Tank been more user-friendly than it actually is. The biggest problem with the simulation is that it attempts to simulate something that has yet to happen. Why couldn't EA have set the game in something like the Afghanistan conflict, for example? And why always against the

**£24.95**

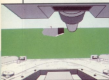
**58%**

Graphically, Abrams Battle Tank is less than inspiring, with poor definition and slow, jerky animation. Unusual for the PC, when titles such as Dark Side of AI, with the same graphics style, update at a much faster rate. Sound is particularly unimpressive, consisting mainly of a horrific, bubbly noise (presumably engine noise) which adds nothing, and probably detracts, from the overall atmosphere of the program.

Soviet Union anyway? However, enough with the politics.

Being a simulator, there are a host of different key controls, and while most of them are generally useful, there are some which have simply been repeated in other modes. In fact, it is these admittedly impressive — but rather useless — extra options, which go a long way to seriously slowing down gameplay.

Abrams Battle Tank, while not being an imperative purchase, could provide a few lull hours of pleasure to ardent simulation fans, offering a new angle from the normal plane/helicopter idea.



Absolutely ahead of it's controlling to be in an M61 Abrams tank



**Barbaric assault: It's okay for the players, but cruel for Roma, Gloire and Livorno!** *Andrew Bligh* should have a field day...

forwards you. If it knocks you down, the opposition gains points, but luckily for you can make illegal shots.

After each match day, the Ranges of the Gloire must be faced. Gloire attack from eight directions (aiming for a finish point) but you, as a dealer, have a 'thore-of-pole' with which to defend yourself.

If a league is won (three matches must first be won) the Remarkable On Fautours are faced! These small rounds all play pillars of various heights and you have one attempt to kick a goal into each fountain (gaming mouth) — the trajectory of the goal is determined by the button depression.

The first thing that strikes you with Grand Monster Slam is the high quality presentation: great music begins on the title

screen before leading you to the menu, complete with practice options, detailed competitor futures, and mini-profile on your opponent. The actual game is very very simple, though: just kick the balls as quickly as you can. Being able to knock down your opponent with a shot adds something, particularly as there's the ability to direct them, but usually you're too involved with getting rid of the balls — and avoiding the ones toward you — that you don't have time to aim.

Nevertheless, Grand Monster Slam is a source of real fun, that misses out on playability by excluding the obvious option of a two-player game (shame).

#### OTHER FORMATS

Amiga ST, PC (both £14.95) and Commodore 64 (both £9.95, disk £12.95) should have hit the shelves on the approximate release date of May 11.

## VERSION UPDATES

PC

### Nebulus

NEWSON £24.95

Specimen 8MHz, C44 6MHz — TOSMOS: Amiga ST 6MHz, Amiga 6MHz — TOSMOS



John Phillips's cute novelty of a reversing platform game made a big 8-bit hit 18 months ago. The game's hero, Popo, has to climb several towers set in an arena. The towers apparently reverse, thus keeping Popo centre-screen, while you follow him ever higher up their endless spiral staircases. Frequently he has to cut through the web of a tower to reach another ascending staircase, until he reaches the top. After descending him from his task by either killing him or knocking him off a step. The PC game is as attractive to look at and as fondly playable as any of the earlier versions. **TQM Update: 83%**

Amiga ST

### Stormlord

NEWSON £19.95 cash, £14.95 disk (discount 60% — TOSMOS)

What is surprising is that for once it's not a slight port across, instead, Bull has made excellent use of Mode 2 graphics to show off the machine's colourful palette. Sounds is effective as well, with some neat spot FX. Gameplay is on the one hand easier than the Spectrum's because it's a touch slower, on the other tougher because of a tight time limit. A tough, but addictive arcade adventure which makes good use of the Amiblock. Its deserves to do very well indeed. **TQM Update: 84%**

On the Seventh Day...

## POPULOUS

Electronic Arts ■ April ST £24.95

Amiga — 60% home 11

Bullying teased the game Populous and review magazines saw that it was good, bestowing on it all their tributes, including even a TISM Top Score (well reviews never cease!). But while there was sublime rap-tunes among Amiga owners, there was a great wailing and gnashing of teeth among ST gamers who were deprived of The Great Game. Bullying saw the tragedy and, as well, And the review magazines looked at this new version and they decided it yet more tributes.

The Great Game allows one or two players via a modern connection to take the part of either God or the Devil in their holy conflict across both worlds. What you face victorious on one world a password is given to jump a couple of levels to another. Each level contains two warring groups of people. To win you must build up enough energy to test contents of winning an apocalypse where all the people engage in total war. To build up energy you must have lots of peo-

ple, which is achieved by leveling the ground around farms — allowing them to expand — and basking the enemy and to trying to kill them. As your energy increases you can attack the enemy with earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, floods and even lightning (who wander around burning enemy huts).

Once you know what all the icons mean gameplay is simple, relatively fast and completely addictive. The ST game duplicates the Amiga graphics perfectly, but with the soundtrack and atmospheric heart beat are missing leaving only effective spot FX.

Rid with gameplay this addictive that's only a minor point, this is an essential purchase.

**TQM Update: 90%**

machine  
STAR  
UPDATE



High rewards for willing heroes

## MAYDAY SQUAD

Tynesoft

I f you thought the SAS were tough, you obviously haven't heard about the Mayday Squad. When the police, army or others can't sort out a dangerous situation they call over to these three-man teams, established by the United Nations Security Council to combat international terrorism.

One of the game's most thrilling missions is portrayed in Mayday Squad, the computer game. The Libanian Embassy

leader (who is also a journalist), communications expert (jacks jacks, uses computers etc.) and a demolitions expert (deals with explosives and deactivating traps).

Each member of the team is controlled individually (using a pointer with onscreen direction arrows) and viewed from behind, their head and shoulders are shown at the bottom of the screen as corridor junctions and doors are approached in perspective.

The leader is used simply to explore and



has been overrun by the previously unknown terrorist group The Red Legion. The Legion are threatening to blow up the embassy at sundown if their demands are not met (though quite what the demands are the game fails to say).

Worse still, the Libanian Ambassador's daughter is trapped inside. Not scared to leave her hiding place for fear of capture and being taken hostage. Members of The Red Legion have already begun to search the embassy, so even if the noble building can be saved, the daughter may be in for a nasty time.

You first view a number of profiles in order to choose the three-man team you want to guide. Each team must comprise a

shoot terrorist. The communications expert has a number of functions accessed from a menu, such as search, use computer and use listening device. The demolitions expert can perform special tasks like laying a booby trap, throwing a grenade and setting a 30-minute time bomb.

Coincidentally or not, Mayday Squad plays similarly to the interior level of Intergalactic Hostages, indeed, with the same sort of Embassy and terrorist plot and the same graphical viewpoint, it's very like the French product. However, Mayday Squad has more than the shoot-and-run play of Hostages; there's a bigger area to explore and with the two 'experts' you can

## VERSION UPDATES

AREA

## Crazy Cars II

TITUS (1988)

Amstrad 486, Commodore

Apparently little attempt has been made to improve the Amiga version (except, apart from the enhanced sound effects, this is virtually identical to the ST game). And maybe it's no illusion, but the controls seem a little over-sensitive, because very often little effort is needed to spin the car off the road. Otherwise, as racing games go, Crazy Cars II gives a vast plenty of fun.

TOM Update: 77%

AREA ST

## Airborne Ranger

MICROPROSE (\$24.95)

Commodore 64, IBM PC, Amstrad Spectrum, ST, PC 100, Tandy, Amstrad CPC900, TOSMI

MicroProse are branching out in all directions at the moment but Airborne Ranger reaffirms the company's real, very strong, first game. The game involves 12 sets of Commodore-style screens and a lot of thought. The graphics are well-defined, 3D colour isn't used in the game's programme (which's a pity, because the real thing is), despite the screen's looking 3D and, and due to the over-use of colour, much of the only realism and atmosphere is found in the 4x4 and PC versions is lost — however, the control precision of combining attack and evade skills goes some way to compensating that. An acceptably clever game.

TOM update: 740%

SPECTRUM

## Vindicators

TANGENT (\$19.95 case, £14.95 disk)

Amstrad 486, Amstrad 8088, TOSMI

With the Amstrad and ST conversions of Vindicators, Tangent's computer debut couldn't have been better. Sadly, the Spectrum is not the machine to show off Commodore's recent licence. With just a monochrome display, the game quickly becomes tedious. Spectrum Vindicators is not helped by graphics, which are outdated enough, but lack variation. Considering the Amstrad version, a real disappointment.

TOM update: 57%

As a lot more than just gun people down.

Both versions advance the characters in 'practical steps' rather than zooming in perspective, so that when a room is entered (after gaining access by picking the lock, machine-gunning the door or blowing it up with a grenade) there's a sense of anticipation as to whether there will be a gun-toting terrorist or two lying in wait! The game isn't as slick as the Commodore 64, though, losing out on the atmosphere and compelling action, but it's still a good buy for heroic soldiers of fortune everywhere.

## OTHER FORMATS

Amstrad ST (£19.95) and PC (£24.95) versions are now available.

CD-ROM  
CASE  
£14.95 disk

The Squad member portraits on the selection screen are well drawn, but in the game background graphics are blocky and ugly, with terrorists vaguely defined, hair with weirdly shaped heads. Weird things happen like killed terrorists simply disappearing and destroyed doors remaining visible, unchanged. Sound effects are dull accompanied by inappropriate beeps.

CD-ROM  
£19.95

Some cute little character graphics accompany the variables on the option screen, and this trend is continued in the game. While the graphics aren't fantastically detailed (the backgrounds are sparse) they're colourful and cartoon-like, despite being largely unanimated. The occasional sound effects are sampled and the title music is effectively grim but repetitive. Some great simulated newspaper pages round off each game.



# Be part of the action

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## COMPUTER SHOW

### MIDI

All the latest hardware and software in the rapidly expanding scene of music music will be on display, including keyboards, samplers, sequencers and professional studio software.

With an Atari/Midi setup you can produce top-quality music, quickly and simply - editing out mistakes in a way that's impossible with live recordings. So if you're in any way interested in making music with your music this is the place to come to find out all about it.

### CAD

Computer-aided Design has grown to become one of the most important tools for modern companies. With a CAD system you can design houses, cars and electronic circuits - in a fraction of the time it would take you with pen and paper.

With the high speed and powerful graphics of Atari systems it's hardly surprising that bigger and better CAD programs are pushing back the frontiers all the time.

And only at the Atari Computer Show can you see all the latest systems under one roof.

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Many companies will be demonstrating their latest software and hardware, specially designed to release the full business potential of Atari computers.

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And you'll also be able to get expert advice from professionals.

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The art of combining text and pictures is big business nowadays because, with a low-cost DTP program, you can create anything from a chain newsletter to a monthly magazine or book.

At the show you'll be able to try out the latest cameras, digitizers and super-fast programs, and get a first-hand glimpse of the way DTP is set to develop in the future.

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Fri & Sat: 10am - 10pm,

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The Atari Computer Show is back - with many new products and developments. Atari has grown to be one of the major players in the computer world, supported by an incredible wealth of top quality applications, games and utilities - all on view at this show.



## Business



## GAMES

### GAMES

Atari computers are renowned for their ability to run fast-action arcade-quality games.

The range of new software on show will demonstrate how the power of these machines is continually being stretched, producing faster and even more addictive games with superb graphics.

The winning entry in the STOS GameMaker of the Year Award will be revealed, and several new exciting STOS accessories will be shown for the first time.

If you're a home game player, you'll find there's so much to offer at the show - you're guaranteed a real treat!

### DON'T MISS IT

To live a great day out - whether you want to see what the future holds for Atari computer users, take advantage of the bargains on offer or get advice on specific applications - the Atari Computer Show is the place to go.

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Please quote credit card number and full name.

Fighting the thrust of gravity

# RAIDER

Impressions

**I**f in space isn't a bunch of roses at the best of times, a ten-month wait for mail and no chance of holidays, the could be considerably better. They could be easier for the Empire too.

The Imperial Raider *Raiders* have rebelled and taken command of eight planets, and vital pods needed to keep powerplants running on each planet have been stolen — your a combined midlevel jet is supposed to the Empire and leave no trace.

To save the Empire, you are sent in a commando combat craft to destroy all resistance, recover the powerplants and replace them in their reactors. Protecting these key interests with gun emplacements, the rebels have also hidden each pod from view with cloaking devices. Only by destroying the game can you locate the pod, pick it up and thrust away to the next planet.

Games are often hidden deep in caverns and underground corridors — demonic thrashing and judicious shield use is all there is to keep you from scraping the rocky surfaces or running into bullets. And with the constant pressure of a rapidly decreasing energy supply, picking up fuel pods at every opportunity is a good idea.

Once fuel pods are in the ship's hold, you can enter a powerplant and tame the meltdown. By travelling to the core and inserting the pods the powerplant comes



back on line, but it's best to make sure you aren't in the reactor when it starts spunk back into life.

There are four planet types, changing from normal to inverted gravity and limited visibility (dark zones or late levels where a 'reach touch' is provided). A powered system allows for play to continue from the last successfully restored powerplant. Thrust, the ancient con-up (Lander and Ode come to mind), all are satisfyingly simple and highly playable games. *Raider* is similar, but sadly it doesn't expand enough on them, preferring to rely too much on differing planetary conditions to offer the challenge — and it's not enough to hold interest.

*Raider* falls between stools, lacking *Clash*'s sparkle and involvement while missing the chance for greater commercial success at the pricing level of *Thrust*. Fans of the former programs may well revel in *Raider*'s ideas, but interest quickly wanes once all eight planets have been visited.

*Raiders* score new ideas on the *Clash* theme, but lacking sparkle

**£19.99**  
**SALE 58%**

The different planets incorporate excellent detail and graphics quality but the sound and presentation isn't as subtle or classy as in *Clash*. Sound effects can never help much in this type of game but the detail in the command craft and game could have been better.

## OTHER FORMATS

An Atari ST version of the same price is expected soon.

There's a grisly scene awaiting you at...

# BUTCHER HILL

Granite Graphics

**E**very war has a hell — Edge Hill (Civil War), Pork Chop Hill (Korea) and Butcher Hill (Vietnam, according to Granite) and there must be others... Hills are there to be taken for no other reason than they're there and the enemy don't want you to have them.

The enemy camp on Butcher Hill's the target, but first you navigate a jungle river in a dinghy, gathering containers of extra ammunition, energy for the flagging status meter and free foodstuffs.

Setting the riverbank, river rafts, lurking mines (through a wall job of the fire button soon clears a path) or getting strafed by enemy planes keeps busy.

Arriving at the end-of-level jetty, you plunge into thick undergrowth where the occasional enemy sniper or landmine is encountered — both fatal, but at least you can blast the soldier. If you poked up a compass on the water section you should be able to find your way around.

In clearing enemy soldiers pop out of buildings and trees, and bonus ammunition and stamina are awarded to sharp shooters who dispose of them all.

At the base of Butcher Hill the camp can

be tackled by lobbing grenades into hulls. But don't let any of the enemy escape because given the chance they'll get off and call in some reinforcements.

With only three sections, *Butcher Hill* may give the impression that it's a doodle in cartridges, but don't let on to it. Unless you collect the compass on the river section, for example, you find yourself completely lost in the jungle.

**£19.99**  
**SALE 64%**

Pictured above: apart from the jungle section, which looks rather atmospheric, the graphics are dull and lifeless (mainly greens and browns), which puts the dampeners on game enjoyment. It isn't quite as playable as the Spectrum version.



**£7.99**  
**SALE 66%**

**£19.99 disk**

Colourful, but with occasional flicker and clash, especially on the river section. The gameplay isn't hampered too much by the annoying loading system.

## OTHER FORMATS

Amstrad CPC and Commodore 64/128 versions priced £9.99 each and £14.99 disk will be available soon, with an Amiga version to follow at £19.99.

## Hockey on the rocks

## AMERICAN ICE HOCKEY

Mindscape

The growing sport of ice hockey gets another outing in the computer arena, following Arcus's simple introduction in *Race Off* (Atari ST £29, Commodore £29).

American Ice Hockey has some vague type of goal in that the *IceTime* Hockey League is going to expand to allow one more team in each of the four leagues. You are the manager/coach/owner of a club, with the obvious aim of improving your league position, possibly gaining promotion, and more optimistic still, winning a cup.

Before a match is played, and subsequently between matches, various facts and figures can be viewed, and those affecting your team adjusted. Team and league histories are a list of statistics (points, matches played, won, lost, drawn etc), which gradually develop as matches and seasons are played.

Your team's improvement is paramount so this has its own menu. You have 1,000 trading points which can be used in a variety of ways. General improvement affects the whole team's performance (as if they'd been sent off to training camp); the more trading points spent the better. Before a player may be recruited, a member of the existing squad must be dropped; a judgement again made with reference to statistics. The new player is named by yourself, and his offensive and defensive skills (measured by bar graphs) adjusted as desired but only at the rate of trading points.

A player can be traded for one in another team (which their strengths/weaknesses have been assessed) but usually at the expense of trading points.

Players' playing positions can be changed before going to the game screen. Here only colours, match length and number of players per side are altered. Control of your team's centre player, goalie and coach can be switched between computer or human control — the system allows two people to control different members of the team.

Coaching allows you to change the position of players and playing strategies, while total power, effective power, offensive strength and defensive strength are shown as bar graphs to indicate the effectiveness (or otherwise) of your tactics.

Arcade sequences enter the game in the match action sequences, the centre player

can perform a number of different shots, with the goalie making a variety of saves.

For sports people who want more than just a few quick thrills, *Mindscape* have put these usual statistics to detail in *American Ice Hockey*. Many facts and figures have to be displayed to make decisions; most importantly, care has to be taken when spending previous trading points. Then playing strategies and formations have to be worked out, all before the pitch-kicking. Luckily, all this is well documented in the manuals (including tips) so with time it all becomes clear. This isn't most people's cup of tea — the arcade elements aren't particularly exciting — but sport or strategy fans should love it.

USE IT  
79%

£24.99

The statistics, options screens and so on are drab but functional. The pitch graphics are similarly plain and the stick-men sprites lack detail, although animation and movement are fine (scrolling's a bit jerky, though). Music is light and effects simple.

IMMERSIVE  
80%

£24.99

Graphically similar to the ST, the sprites are a bit better and animation's a bit better. Music and effects are improved — consists of repetitive *Amiga* will hear a wide variety of sampled sound sounds.

A lesser moment pleases on the ice in the *Amiga* ST version below



MINDSCAPE  
PENALTY  
0:14

00 04:14 PERIOD 00

DETROIT  
PENALTY  
0:00

OFFENSE: ATTACK  
LM:2 TP: 71 EP: 60

ATTACK: OFFENSE  
134 EP 144 TP 1 LM

DEFENSE: FORECHECK  
LM:1 TP: 84 EP: 73

FORECHECK: DEFENSE  
95 EP 111 TP 1 LM

PC  
71%

£24.99

With its use of EGA, the PC version is near identical to the ST, other than the (very) weaker sound due to the PC's feeble audio capabilities.

## OTHER FORMATS

GB4 out now, cost £9.99 disk £14.99. No others expected.

## MSX

## Operation Wolf

Commodore £9.95 disk, £14.99 disk  
Commodore 80% Commodore 64 £29.99  
Commodore 80% Commodore 64 £29.99  
Commodore 80% Commodore 64 £29.99

To keep speed up, the MSX had to be compromised. But given the nature of the game, the speed to ensure realistic and highly enjoyable gameplay with no strings or lags attached. Even when completed, *Operation Wolf* has that elusive addictive quality which keeps you coming back again and again to try and beat that high score. Definitely a candidate for one of the best can-do conversions on the MSX — and all this despite the machine's restrictions.

TOM update 8-1%

## Amiga

## Victory Road

Imagines £24.99  
Amiga ST £29.99, Amiga CPC £29.99, Commodore 64 £29.99

This has identical graphics to the ST version, although someone has been so kind and made the sprites slightly larger. The ST's scrolling sure doesn't help the situation, neither does the slow pace at which should be created leading damage and all out action.

TOM update 5-4%

## PC

## Times Of Lore

MicroProse  
Commodore 64 £29.99, Commodore 64 £29.99, Commodore 64 £29.99

The slow pace, which contains the arcade adventure's score and displays has been extended to reduce the size of the scrolling screen action area. Scrolling — still jerky — is fast, so your character goes about the quest at a fair pace. The graphics are neat and colourful with reasonable detail — it looks very similar to the Commodore 64 original, and plays just as well.

TOM update 7-6%

# SOFTWARE SNAX

■ **Software Snax** is the section for short reviews, the ones that came in too late to fit in the main body of reviews, or which fell in between TGM's schedules. Just because they're here doesn't necessarily mean we think they're rubbish — just check out some on this spread...

## NAVY MOVES

**Dynamic ■ Amstrad CPC**  
£9.95 case, £14.95 disk

Two years on and, as its title suggests, the sequel to *Army Moves* is equally in nature. Your mission: infiltrate and destroy the enemy U-5544 nuclear submarine.

Beginning in a water boat, jacking commands are streamlined on the way to the reconnaissance point, where you beam through shark-infested waters, armed with a harpoon. A battlescope within the enemy base is entered and sets and outposts (plural of outposts, yknow) fought past to gain access to the second boat — the sub.

Here codes are gained from slain crew members so that the sub's computer can be used — to open up corridors, stop the motors, raise the sub, and send a personal distress signal before the U-5544 submerges — permanently.

Once again, Dynamic's product is saved from terminal mediocrity by a number of distinct game sections. Changing vehicles and tactics prevents boredom and gives more incentive to complete the mission, though in common with other Dynamic games, the difficulty level (gothaps at its highest here) may put some off.

Cosmetic and lively (but blocky) graphics disguise animation and scrolling which is little substandard, but the gory underwater death sequences are effective. Amongst the middle-of-the-road sound, there are one or two good effects.

Perhaps the best of Dynamic's releases, *Navy Moves* will find favour with rusty-toughened gamersayers provided that they don't mind getting their digitised feet wet.

**TGM rating: 6.7%**



## CHUCKIE EGG II

**Pick 'n' Choose ■ Atari ST**  
Amiga £19.95

Older gamers may remember a simple platform game called *Chuckie Egg*, from A Y Y F Software; this is its more complex sequel. Now Pick 'n' Choose (abbreviated) and's go hand-in-hand with *Chuckie*



*Egg* have converted it to the 16-bit, giving him a new house (Harry a new taste of life, Harry has to restore order in a chocolate egg factory gone haywire. After distracting the guard dog, he explores for the objects required: egg ingredients, toy parts, ladders and tools.

Platforms and ladders may be an aged format, but it's surprising how much interest is generated. Definition is simple, with bigger graphics on the Amiga, and both sprites and backgrounds have pixel detail — but nine-to-five jumping is required. *Fluffy* must urge you on, with the Amiga voices periodically more professional sounding. A bit pricey, though, for such a simple game.

**TGM rating: Atari ST 60%, Amiga 60%**

Burning up the green below again

## STEVE DAVIS WORLD SNOOKER

**CDS Software ■ Atari ST £19.95**  
Amiga £19.95

At times of green baize, cue and ball action are catered for here, even a short version of snooker with only ten rods. As well as standard 15-red snooker, pool (UK and US versions) and billiards, English and Caran's ten poolball can the table, can also be selected from the game menu.

The Options menu selects player mode, levels of practice (no opposition, balls can be moved freely and shots taken back). The next level is set between one and six — thanks to Steve Davis.

The power of each shot is measured at the bottom of the screen, spin put on the ball by a cue ball diagram and shot direction set by a key scrolling from the cue ball showing its initial direction. Aim is fine-tuned with a handy zoom feature. Good or unusual shots made can be replayed in slow motion — a bit like watching Cliff Trobman play, really.

The graphics are nice identical on both versions, and like most billiards games for those new fangled 3-D ones, the balls and pockets are clearly defined. The only other necessary visual feature is smooth ball movement and realistic marbles, which come slow down on break-offs, and balls occasionally slip with unusual swiftness.

*World Snooker* is satisfactory in this area.

Faible clicks on the ST are replaced by pleasing samples on the Amiga, but both have a few digitised Northern accents.

CDS have been wise: the snookerpool business since leisure software began, and this latest is a 16-bit conversion of their successful both at full- and budget-priced Steve Davis Snooker of some years back, with the addition of pool and a few useful features and, bonus, 16-bit.

(Read in a witty whiff-puffing Ted Laves voice). And what a great shot there from the Nottingham lad! — Latest in a long line of green (and blue) baize games from CDS.



## CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER VERSION 2.0

Electronic Arts ■ PC £29.99

Chuck breaks the sound barrier for the second time on the PC in what is effectively an expansion of the existing Advanced Flight Trainer program. Four new aircraft have been added to the simulation of flying test aircraft including the Space Shuttle (a really decent one), and, at last, a properly shaped F-117 Stealth Fighter!

An aerobically smart formation option is also included for those seeking the ultimate in group thrills 20,000 feet up. My far and away a major step above the old Chuck Yeager AF-1, the graphics are a far more

professional in presentation and even faster programming techniques have been incorporated.

With the speed, though, comes the inevitable larger steps in learning, becoming, very noticeable in particular on the lower end PCs. Life is made not only difficult but frustrating as a result, with key repeats an ever present problem.

EGA is, as usual, used to good effect

— peripheral screens are excellent, the most notable being a superbly drawn Chuck offering detailed advice following a crash. A very welcome feature is the alternate designs of each cockpit from the three basic cockpit of a typical 1950s to the more comfortable surrounds of a Piper Chequero. A pity none of the test jets use the same cockpit layout.

Test flights were great fun on the original PC version and that has come across in its entirety in Version 2.0. EGA is used to superb effect and the concept of test flights



is improved upon with new aircraft, smoother control, more realistic flight performance and rick presentation. Ideally of course, it's best to have a 286 or 386 machine when playing.

When's the Chuck Yeager Combat Simulator coming out EA?

**TOM rating: 87%.**



games are in relatively short supply (and this one will eventually be released for the PC), this is a must for mouse-steering war heads.

**TOM rating: Atari ST 81%.**  
**Amiga 84%.**



## OPERATION NEPTUNE

Infogrames ■ Atari ST £24.95  
Amiga £24.95

My name's Moore, Bob Moore. I'm a tall, handsome and scintillatingly handsome secret agent and my task is to take the Free World from the psychotic Yellow Shadow. (Don't believe it — his real name is Ming. Doesn't sound so grabbiting and when you say it that way, does it?)

Ming's building killer robots in inter-connected underwater bases. If these are unleashed the world will be at Ming's mercy. That's where I come in — at 6.15pm to be precise. Can't remember the day.

I parachuted, complete with a silly jet pack, into the area of ocean known to house filling bases and hooked seven bells out of one of his landmines. It didn't take long to dispose of him or slide into my super minisubmarine to search the ocean depths and destroy Ming's bases.

**CRUDDLE:** Operation Neptune is a tough but fairly longwinded arcade puzzle game, with pretty graphics and better than average Jason Blitcher, Jane-sounding tone. Really only for arcade game fans.

**TOM rating: Atari ST 58%.**  
**Amiga 53%.**



Underwater activity on the ST

## BATTLETECH

Infogrames ■ AMIGA £24.95

Infogrames — famed for complex adventures like the Zork trilogy — have turned to graphical roleplaying games with BattleTech, which concerns your training to become a MechWarrior.

A BattleMech is a huge war robot controlled by a human pilot. Game control is simple. The playing screen is split into three sections: upper left for printing messages, it battle situations, and telling you your direction; bottom left for displaying characters in your group, along with a readout of their physical condition; and the right-hand portion is used to view the surroundings.

Your character, Jason Youngblood, is controlled by moving a pointer around the screen and clicking on the left mouse button. Throughout the game various test descriptions appear followed by a list of options from which you are asked to make a choice. Choose wisely and get plenty of training, because your very own BattleMech awaits your graduation and participation in the coming battle.

The overhead graphics are good, and the animated graphics which appear during battles put you in mind of brilliant

Japanese comic book illustrations. With its simple to use control system, high playability and impressive graphics, BattleTech is a must for all RPG fans — and probably anyone.

**TOM rating: 88%.**











# CONFRONTATION: COIN-OP

This month it's Mark Caswell who takes himself off to enjoy some arcade mayhem with the newest games. But what's this? The first turns out to be for toddlers...

## Rompers

Names

**F**rom what I can gather — my Japanese has never been up to much — *Rompers* is your typical girl meets boy, falls in love and gets abducted to a large and ugly monster story. So, jettison your rather-fetching yellow hat further down on your head, you go to battle.

You start by standing in the centre of a *Play-Mate*-style track, surrounded by walls and protruding keys — along with a range of attractive enemies. Fear-shaped ghosts

wander around the play area and pink hippo-like creatures meander while belching out dense sheets of flame (aimed in the way and you get frustrated).

However, Our Hero isn't defenceless, he can shove the walls to squash helpless badies, and is then clear to pick up the keys and move onto the next screen. It's all clean and cute fun, and a pleasant change from many of the violence-packed games in the arcades recently.



## Mechanised Attack



**C**omes of *Operation Wolf* or *Thunderbolt* have always abounded, the most recent being SNK's *Mechanised Attack* — which, thankfully, is pretty good.

As usual, you play the part of a mercenary (with the option of a friend) sent to rescue cap-

tured fellow spies from the hands of a band of nasty guerrillas. You must travel to a remote island and, with the aid of numerous arms, penetrate the enemy's heavily-guarded headquarters.

One hold of the cabinet-mounted machine gun and

SNK

choose which startled hen you want to represent you, now board your landing craft ready to storm the beaches. Obstacles between you and dry land include ships, frogmen, helicopters and submarines —

all of which do their best to knock your damage meter up.

When landed, the situation doesn't improve; soldiers from bushes and trees blast away with added venom. It's a tough task, so shooting and picking up extra ammo, grenades and other items always helps. There's no doubt that *Mechanised Attack* is another *Operation Wolf*, but those who like a bit of computerised violence are well catered for.

## The Final Round

Konami

**T**he *Final Round* is, despite its title, by no means the definitive boxing game. The aim is to become world champion, so choose a boxer and enter the training camp.

The three attributes to build up are speed, power and stamina, which are increased with the help of weights, punch bag, etc. Once you're fighting it, it's time

for the start of your long haul to the top. An annoying referee drones on about the rules, the seconds are out, and it's Round One.

All the usual boxing moves — defensive and offensive — are available (via three buttons), but watch the power meter at the bottom of the screen: too many hits and you could be down for the count (playing on the



## Super Off Road

Leland

**T**hree people can participate in Leland's Super Off Road, so it's fun for all the family. After the preliminaries have been sorted out (giving your name, press-

ing, both data) is a visit to Leland's Showroom lets you out with a range of goodies like nitro (for extra speed), tires, shock absorbers, rapid acceleration and a higher top speed.



## The Final Round

carded if your power is low. Win four bouts and you will be allowed to train and build up

your strength all over again. The Final Round is nothing out of the ordinary, with some attractive graphics, and didn't thrill me too much.

## AND A COUPLE OF QUICKIES...

The action seems to have gone missing in Atari's latest in Action, which is little more than a very average Green Beret clone. Shows in the left pane and control a mercenary in green combat fatigues at an enemy base, slaughtering with a command rifle.

Apart from the soldiers, other obstacles such as mines,

guard dogs and airplane propellers really ought to be avoided. And so ought the game.



We crossed the new Williams machine Atari in the AT&T reprint, but missed the plot. Here it is: just check out the admirably atmospheric New York subway station scenes, and remember kids just say 'no' to drugs.



it's not all hard driving work in Super Off Road, there are also some sights to be seen!

All vary in price, so some can only be collected later on.

As the first pick-up truck (always a computer opponent) prepare for action, you must expect a track filled with all sorts of dangers: water-filled pits, huge mounds of earth, ramps and many turbulent bends.

Dangerous driving combined with a few rules blocks soon

gets you in the lead (although a quick job in a friend's ribs also has the same effect). More traps as well as nitro can be found on the track, and these too up your flipping reserves. At the end of the day the race will be won by sheer lunatic driving. Super Off Road is one of the best multiplayer games I've seen in a while, keep an eye out for it.



**E**ven here, in the deepest recesses of Simsbury, the sequel has arrived. Turbo Car Run is a 16-stage Trans-USA race passing through New York, Chicago and Miami, before finishing in Los Angeles. The old Transcass has been bought by Arthur Daley to jump into your new, gleaming Ferrari F40. Thankfully, Ted didn't get his passport on your travels, so quit about of her and prepare

to race. As with Atari's Hard Driver both a manual and automatic gearbox mode are offered, novice drivers are advised to go for an automatic. There's also the Turbo Booster of the title, but it's very prone to overheating. The scenery's different and the car is more of a bandol, but basically there's not that much of an improvement over the original.

# KICK OFF



**BLISTERING PACE  
PIXEL PERFECT PASSING  
SUPERB TACTICAL PLAY**

A Soccer Simulator which  
is not only accurate and  
realistic but is also  
great fun to  
play

Whatever your style of play may be, be it playing the Long Ball or playing the Sweeper, your players will be in position to receive the passes, control the midfield and tackle on advancing strikes. Each player on the field is an individual with a unique combination of four attributes - Pace, Accuracy, Stamina and Aggression. Match out for the Brazilians at the International level, they are dynamite.

\* Full size multi-directional scrolling pitch with scanner showing all the players on the field.

\* Option to practice and learn ball control, take corners and practice penalties.

\* 5 Skill levels, International to Sunday Leagues. The levels of both teams set separately. The ultimate challenge is the defeat of the star studded team of Internationalists by the Sunday Leagues of no-hopers. A super human test of skill and concentration.

\* One or two players options. \* 4 distinct tactics.

\* League competition for 1 to 8 players. Local and Semi League facilities.

\* Simple controls to dribble, shoot, pass, chip or head the ball or do a sliding tackle.

\* Amazing ball simulation takes account of the ground and air friction. Direction changing losses at the higher skill levels.

\* 5 types of Corner kicks, Penalties, Yellow and Red cards and a host of other features like players getting tired by the end of the game, time wasting, injury time, etc.



**PLAYING IT IS EASY**

**MASTERING IT WILL TAKE TIME - A LOT OF TIME**



Amiga



Atari ST



IBM PC



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# BUILD YOUR OWN JOYSTICK!

**■ DESIGN a better stick...  
WIN a working day at  
the Powerplay factory...  
EXPERIENCE Alton Towers!**

**T**hey're in big trouble at Powerplay. Thing is, they reckon that their new Powerplay Crystal joystick is the best in the world — but what can they do next? Turn to TGM, of course... so now the joystick stars are asking you to design the best stick yet.

And if you're one of the two top winners in the TGMPowerplay contest, you'll spend a day with a friend at Powerplay — building your own limited Edition Crystal stick, supplied with nothing but a wild array of coloured mouldings! The day continues with lunch for the winners and Powerplay staff, and an afternoon at the Alton Towers fun park. The prize also includes train travel from wherever you live to Coes (and back), and it's all on a Saturday — July 7, to be exact — so no driving excurses are required.

To enter, just send in a drawing of your ideal joystick, includ-

ing all the features it needs for perfect games-playing. There are two first prizes — one for best idea, one for best drawing — so don't lose any sleep over your artistic failings. Drawings can be in any style you like (paint, ink, pencil, dragon, even computer-generated), with explanatory notes if needed, but we'd appreciate it if you kept to a reasonable paper size (A3/A5).

Five runners-up will receive Powerplay Crystal sticks.

Entries with your name, address and telephone number should reach us at POWERFUL PLAY CORP, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1BB by June 22. If you can, please send the name of the friend who'll accompany you so train seats can be booked; and please enclose an SAE of the right size if you'd like your entry back. Usual rules apply, which is boring, but then so is much of life.





Simon Gibbs

# Images of Power

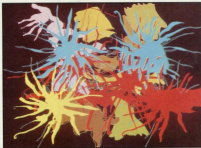
Let's have more of the art and less of the computers.

says Simon Gibbs from Bourtonbridge — creator of all this month's Gallery pictures.

Simon started using a BBC micro to create designs for ceramics and paintings, and while studying for a fine art degree at Wolverhampton Polytechnic he quickly progressed to a powerful Spacoword Supernova system to produce these screens.

Says Simon: "The works I produce are a direct coupling of science and art, and what I hope to do in the future is make this connection a lot less obvious. Too much emphasis today is put on the computer as a high-tech advertising tool, this is not its only function and I hope, as someone deeply involved

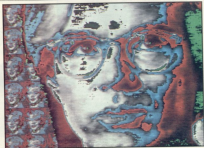
in this area, that through my computer images and video I can begin to show this."



Chapter 1 (top). The cover artwork of Eric Clapton's August album inspired Simon to create these striking variations. Many of Simon's pictures use psychedelic colours to catch the eye, and in Flag (centre) the figure is clearly overwhelmed by the background flag design. Created back in May 1987, Chapter 6 (above) is reminiscent of Jackson Pollack's earlier paintings.

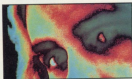
In *Marked Gobs* (right), Simon's portrait of the late New York gang artist Andy Warhol, he uses saturation techniques to create a striking effect.

*Darkness* (below) is drawn using a restricted palette, and demonstrates clearly how symmetry commands can be used to create a pleasing effect.



In *Montage II* (above) repeated images, made in the manner of Andy Warhol's own famous montaged prints of the Hollywood star, are used to great effect to create a simple but impressive montage.

Resampling a picture always produces interesting effects, as in *Face* (left). Here Simon has taken a picture of a face and resampled it to give it a sinister alien appearance.



# Images of Power



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# Robin Candy's PLAYING TIPS

Robin Hogg hands over the reins to ex-CRASH Tipster Robin Candy in the first edition of a new-look Playing Tips column



## Populous

Crash's editor Robin Hogg may be busy writing features on C64 and arcade games, but he still finds time to play Electronic Arts's fabulous Populous. Here are just a few of his findings.

(Amstrad ST)

■ **Leveling the land** is the key to world domination, but build land high up from the sea. On lower levels just one or two knights are usually enough to rid the land of any enemies. Build a square base around your home and wait for people to expand their lands. Once one or two settlements are up and running, gradually raise the level of the land.

■ **A castle** may be stronger but in the short term it isn't as productive as a couple of small buildings. Don't concentrate all your energy in just one building. If a castle is created in the first few minutes, reduce the land

around it to knock it down a step or two and improve the speed around the Fire Worlds lake slowly. The land is unforgiving, with its masses of rocks and fiery water. Once a foothold is gained build on it with care.

■ **The Volcano** isn't much good in either a tactical or strategic sense and the swamp is limited in use and range. The earthquake is one of the better disaster options beaten only by the flood. Knights are among the most important in both the short and long term. Don't forget that as you score more victories and rid the land of more of the enemy minions, so the real God awakens. On the lower levels, if you get a succession of blows in the enemy often has little chance of recovery.



**B**ack again! It's been quite some time since I've edited a Playing Tips column — but you soon fall back into the habit of editing through readers' letters rejecting this and editing that. Any Playing Tips column relies heavily on reader input — it just wouldn't be the same without you! I'm looking for tips on the latest and greatest games. It doesn't matter what computer you own — if you've got some useful information to impart then send it to me. Not only will you see your name in print, but you may win the TGM Star Tips £50 software voucher. For my first 15th column I've got some hot tips for Populous and War in Middle Earth as well as a bumper console special... But enough of the boring waffle, let's get on with the really interesting stuff.



## Pipeline

(All formats)

Mr Anthony from Crows has been playing Pipeline intensively for some time now. He'd become so good at it that he sent in all the level passwords:

**FOLD, TRAP, SUCK, EYES, REAR, ROCK, EGGS.**

## Sanxion: The Spectrum Remix

The latest Thalamus game (derived from the huge Commodore hit hit) may not have been out long, but that hasn't prevented Steve Hare of Southwick from discovering this cheat. Define the keys as C, H, E, A, T then enter the password LYNN for infinite lives.

# Rocket Ranger

(All formats)

*Rocket Ranger* is one of Gamecube's best games to date. If you're having problems with the Mac or machine just follow these tips from **Stephen Wrooch** of Oxford.

1. Go straight to the War Room, ignore the Zappelin for now.
2. Put all your five agents into reserve.
3. Now place your agents in Algeria, Libya, Moscow, Egypt and Russia. This should help contain the Nazis for a while.
4. Now go to the Zappelin to release the Zappelin. The first time the Zappelin appears shoot the missiles. Don't worry about hitting the airship. Because it's out of range. The next stage is a bit trickier. It you hit the ship above the gondola it explodes. So aim carefully. When you enter the Zappelin for the first time use the following replies: *Listen Up*, *Coffins*, *I Like Your Style*, *I Coughin Teach You*, *I Took The Scenic Route*, *Can You Use Some Help*. The second time you enter the Zappelin use: *I'm Glad to See You Too*, *I Just Want To Help You*, *Can You Use Some Help*, *Can You Use Some Help*. The third time use: *I'd Be Happy To Leave*, *I Just Want To Help You*, *Can You Use Some Help*.
5. Return to Port Dix and read the agents' reports. They get them to organize resistance.
6. Find the Nazi base, because you're going to need the Luftarium later on to get the rocket points safely back to Port Dix.



7. If an agent reports the location of a Zappelin factory or Nazi base, go to fight there and destroy it to keep Nazi efficiency at a minimum.
8. The first three Nazi guards are easy to beat but all the game progresses they get trickier and trickier to defeat. The best method of ensuring success is to continually use the jet and apartment. ■

# CONSOLES TIPS SPECIAL!

**Not surprisingly (software considered), the Sega takes the lion's share of tips — and several are for the Mega Drive — but we've got a few for Nintendo and the PC Engine too...**

## Kenseiden

(Sega)

John Eland from Bingham has been busy playing *Kenseiden* and there are lots of interesting moves and off-beat warlocks.

1. **The Fire Wheel Warlock**  
Place yourself in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen facing right. The warlock jumps up around the screen, so wait for him to approach you. When he does, jump up and press button 1 to stab him. He falls back for a short time and then attacks again. Repeat the jumping and stabbing actions till he dies. You are then awarded with about 1, making you to jump higher than normal.

2. **The Beakal Warlock**  
This warlock carries an iron-sharp pole which he isn't afraid to use on your skull. The only way to get close enough to use your sword is to rush right up to him and quickly back off. He has hitting you with the pole, but if you're quick enough you can dodge his slow and stab him in the chest. Keep doing this till he dies. You are awarded level 2, which lets you dash with your sword.

3. **The Two-Headed Warlock**  
Both heads go into battle, so stay to the far left of the screen and jump over them. Eventually the fireballs trap and the warlock moves in for the kill. As soon as he does, rush forward and slash at the bottom head with your sword. The head explodes and the top head lowers itself and tries to kill you. Return to the far left of the screen and keep jumping and stabbing. It usually takes about ten hits to kill the second head. You are awarded level 3, which gives you the power to

split the helmet of fire as well as increasing your attack power by one level.

5. **The Pointed Eye Warlock**  
This is quite a feeble warlock and is easily defeated. It flies around dropping acid on your head. Don't worry if these hit you — the amount of damage they drain is insignificant. Follow it around the screen jumping high and using the hammer-splitting technique (push up and press buttons 1 and 2 simultaneously). Once he's defeated you're awarded level 4. You can now attack both forwards and backwards at the same time — this is called pulling the air (jump down and press button 1).

5. **Death's Head Warlock**  
This Warlock also fights above your head, so use the hammer-splitting technique to hit it. When the warlock wants to get close push down and press button 1. This puts you in the defensive position. The warlock splits into eight parts. If you get into the defensive position quickly enough, these are deflected and reform into the warlock without harming you. When you defeat him you are awarded the Dragon Lord's sword.

6. **The Larva Fly Warlock**  
Position yourself at the far left of the screen facing right. The warlock flies around dropping acid bugs. You jump and stab the warlock and then quickly dash and hit any acid bugs that have been dropped. Repeat this process till the warlock is dead. Remember not to move right otherwise you find yourself overrun by acid bugs. At the end of this level you receive the 999 and final sword giving you the power to split your sword while walking (push the control in any direction).

### 7. Yonemah: The Master Warlock

This warlock doesn't attack you physically but hurls fireballs from the top of the screen. These bounce around in multiple of four and must be destroyed. Walk to the middle of the screen and duck down. When the fireballs are near you press button 1. You can usually destroy all four with just one stab. There are two sets of fireballs. When they have all been destroyed the master warlock explodes — but the game doesn't end here. The screen clears and a huge boss enters. He's armed with an electric law which fires three arrows at one go. Walk up to him, duck down and wait for him to fire. It takes three arrows to destroy him. Quickly jump up and to him on the head using the hammer-splitting technique. Then duck down. Repeat this process till the boss is killed. The black circle now goes up in flames.



### General Tips

- If you lose all your lives wait for the 'game over' screen, then push up twice and down twice and you are rewarded with a further three lives. On level 2 climb the Boulder staircase. Stand on his head and push up. You appear on a screen containing a good life giving you full energy.

# CONSOLES TIPS SPECIAL!

## Altered Beast

(Sega Mega Drive)

TOM's Robin Hogg has been playing the Sega MegaDrive nintendo since it arrived at the office. Here are some of his tips for *Altered Beast* and, right next door, *Super Thunder Blade* (sorry, but I can't do his Welsh accent...)

A highly playable game soon at its best in 16-bit

■ Try not to miss out on any of the power-up capsules that come floating from the alien Laserer enemies. Miss one and you have to endure another round of attacks before reaching the boss. The secret only turns ready when you have changed stages.

The secret continue play can be accessed by holding down button A and then press-

ing START, which takes you back to the beginning of the current level.

■ **Level 1 — Hopper**  
Push forward and keep punching the Hopper's body. Use the fire shield if necessary to destroy falling heads.

■ **Level 2 — Octopus**  
Go right up to the multilevel monster and use the dragon balls held to send it to hell.

■ **Level 3 — Mouldy Break**  
Push the snail into a corner to force it so it rears its head. Then leap and roll into its head to drain it of energy. Roll to avoid the wind.

■ **Level 4 — Fatty Grenade**  
Best defeated through teamwork cooperation. For at the lower half of the Doc and use the spread fire shield, then leap to destroy the baby dragons. Try avoiding the flying fireballs and creep ahead to avoid the flying shots.

■ **Level 5 — Hell Whip**  
Go to the far right, turn and face the Flare and throw fireballs like mad at him. Don't stop firing or you'll end up trapped in the coils.



## Rocky

(Sega)

- **Apollo:** stay close to him and keep hitting his head
- **Lung:** stay back from him and keep hitting his stomach
- **Dragon:** stay back from him. Hit him twice in the stomach then once in the head.

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## Super Thunder Blade

(Sega Mega Drive)

At no costs here. Only sitting ducks: make valuable seconds hanging around at ground zero. The dropper normally flies along at top speed and is best suited for getting out of trouble quickly. Anticipate where incoming bullets will impact, and use the move control in moderation to dodge them.

Keep moving in large circles around the screen to dodge the



## Mike Tyson's Punch Out

(Nintendo)

Proved you're Frank Bruno and beat the hell out of Mike Tyson. The following code from Dean Lomas of Demsey transports you straight into the ring of the penultimate fight against Super Macho Man. Beat him and you'll find yourself fighting for the world championship against big Mike himself.

■ Type 008 002 0003.

## Double Dragon

(Sega)

Jason Duncan from Peterhead has this advice on how to beat the badities.

Always try and get your opponent up against a wall where he stands no chance whatsoever. Just keep punching him until he's



dead. The easiest way to kill an opponent is to use flying kicks. To defeat the very last baddie at the end of level 4 you must punch him once at a time and then retreat so that he doesn't have time to hit you back.









## CONFESSIONS

Last month TGM revealed the first screens from Argonaut's F-117A Aggressor sim — but in this instalment of the team's byte-by-byte account, programmer Ian Crowther recalls the cockups they endured in giving those grrfx some gameplay.



"It looks like it's going to be a real pain in the fingers to program"

I only joined the team at Argonaut a few months ago, with little knowledge of 3D bit programming. The first project I was given was to write the high-score table for Afterburner — not a great task in itself, but as the first non-trivial piece of 68000 code I'd ever written I wasn't really helped. I got it working, about four hours before the deadline for duplication.

As soon as my code had been converted and slotted out for the Amiga version, Joe Blair (in his infinite wisdom) put me to work on F-117A Aggressor, and after much mulling and thinking all thoughts he dropped the 38687 system and the mission-handler in my lap.

The mission-handler was going to have to be an incredibly clever piece of code, and it didn't look like an easy thing to write. So, busy as ever, I started on the WAMP system. Digging through the pile of junk that inhabits my desk, I eventually unearthed the spec for the system — buffers, requesters, menus and a reconfigurable mouse pointer were all listed among the requirements.

It was beginning to look like a complete mission done was required, and all to fit inside a few K, so it felt not to cramp the 'important' code.

Two weeks, said I, and I set to work writing better-looking routines, out of which I'd eventually build all the useful bits, and for a few days it was fine: things were even starting to work! Then I got stuck. I needed a superfast way of drawing these little square boxes that all you Windowsers seem not to know and love.

After The Blobber, that wonderful piece of hardware ready at my every call, I started reading the manuals and discovered that it's an ungrateful piece of cursed silicon designed to thwart any but the local stubborn programmer. It finally took three of us (Giles Goodall, Richard Clucas and me) a day and a half to tame the beastie, and then... fatal requesters requested things, lines being reconverted and even a menu list at the top!

Then the bone of every programmer's life struck — the ugly, not

expanded, Amright. We now had to include a text-input device, and make the requesters movable.

A couple of days, and a few routines later the requesters were doing just that, moving around and glitching all over the place, but when Chris Humphries wrote his text routine to cope with text at other than word boundaries things worked smoothly again. With the main things done it was time to clean up the code and attend to all these little bugs that you 'know what it is' and will 'get round to later'. Most were simple little things — changing the order in which routines were called, remembering to check a register that got trashed etc.

### Misleading handler

Now came the time to start thinking about the mission-handler; some serious thinking, and then a bit more thinking. We were starting from scratch on this, with no useful pieces of paper to tell us what not required (and what was worse, even once we'd decided what to do we then had to actually do it). After some fast and not too productive thought, the basic form of the mission-handler was toughed out.

The term mission-handler is pretty misleading — this piece of code has to coordinate most of the objects in the game, design objectives for every moving object and pass orders to them, detailing where they go, what they should do once they've got there, when to run away, etc etc. Things were getting messy.

So, normal procedure of a joint such as this is to break it down into smaller bits and start defin-



ing them. After even more thought and a few sessions (and sweating) we got something down on paper that seemed to cover most ideas involved. Then came the hard bit, actually coding it up (see more sweating).

I started on what I thought would be a relatively easy piece, one that could work out a route from A to B avoiding all enemy radar bases along the way. It was wrong (yet more sweating) — it wasn't even vaguely easy. This kind of thinking would be simple enough for a person, but for the computer to do the same thing took some horrible maths which I eventually got working on (BASIC), with help from Danny Brennan who supplied us with some of the more useful equations.

After clearing my brain over nasty sums for a week or so I decided something a little less serious was in order, so I started cataloguing all the missiles, bombs, fuel tanks, anti-aircraft warfare devices carried by each of the aircraft on the amazingly large list of assets available to the player. This done, I started working on the small section of the user interface that deals with loading these items onto the plane before a mission. The screen is to be split into two sections, one with an image of the player's chosen plane and all its ordnance storable in 3-D, and the other section having the available items displayed as sprites.

This presented a few problems, such as keeping the rest of the game running while the player is in the hangar. Fortunately none were insurmountable, and it was not long before loading a plane with bomb type 1 or even missile was available to all corners.

### Stacked and loaded

Once that was working, the daunting task of converting all my nasty sums into code came into view — not actually difficult in itself, but coping with things such as trying to multiply two long words together and equate-ising the result (Pythagoras never had to do that in history) isn't much fun, and the custom stack that we need to make the recursion in the routine really makes the brain ache.

Fortunately, the weapon-loading routines don't quite work and I had to go back to them. Things needed changing; I hadn't done the bit to give the loaded weapons to the rest of the game (oops) and even as I write this there are bits that still don't work (sweating...). But the

# OF A CODER

problems were mostly just little twiddly bits like making sure I ask for data blocks nicely rather than just smacking them out from under another object, and redesigning the scaling on the missiles so they actually fit all games.

Chris and I then merged our versions and spent a happy morning (leading) to death at the bugs that arose from this ill-fated union. (Paul, meanwhile, was writing a map editor [to edit maps, what else...]) and in between cleaning my brain over wars that were bad for my health, I gave him a hand with converting map scales into numbers that the (theoretic) human brain can cope with (ie 500,000,000 becomes simply 24%). We also invented the "CCC" (standard alternate), which consists of 1,004 missions with 130 coordinates each (no prizes for guessing why).

## Offensive/defensive

During all this time, thoughts on the mission-handler were not altogether halted, and the open was gradually refined into something that not only made a little sense but just might be possible to program. At last I had some more pieces of paper that actually told me what was required.

Every so often new objects would have to be generated and objectives given to them; these would have to make good sense, as giving a task a formation of aircraft as a target would make things a little strange. So each object would be assessed for offensive and defensive capability, and assigned a suitable target. Individual object strategies take

over at this point, and cope with things like getting the objects to the coordinates given them.

This necessitated the formulation of a new data structure, the "order book", which could be passed from object to object, detailing the actions to be taken and things like what priority the orders have. For

instance, a "wander to intercept" would override a standing patrol order, and in some cases even event planes away from their targets to defend friendly territory.

Easy to understand in principle... but it looks like it's going to be a real pain in the fingers to program.

## The more the merrier

F-117A Aggressor looks set to break all flight-sim records — with more planes than Heathrow on a busy summer's day. Running through the list, Ian Crowther counts "36... no, 27 for definite... possibilities on another 12... or possibly more".

Sounds like Electronic Arts should bundle on air-traffic control simulator too...



**"This kind of thinking would be simple enough for a person, but for the computer to do the same thing look some horrible maths"**

**A game by any other name**

**Question: Why's F-117A Aggressor like Activision?**

**Answer: It keeps on changing its name.**

When you first read about the Argonaut blockbuster Battle in Britain 1.5, it was simply called X. But meanwhile, Jon San and his men were privately calling the game House. And I mean I tell you leave COMBAT: That Electronic Arts called on F-117A Aggressor.

## ■ The professional ■

Argonaut's F-117A Aggressor may herald a revolution in solid 3-D, but for 18-year-old programmer Ian Crowther it means something even more momentous. This is the first time I've actually got paid for doing this, though I've been programming 'till a long time ago.

And though there were only a few years between Crowther's first programming experience at sixteen and his initiation into Jon San's high-tech coding team, they must seem unbroken apart. His first work acquaintances were

Z80's and TRS-80's at school, then gradually they got BBC's and I got my hands on a second-hand one, which I still have.

The BBC may be a faithful friend for life, but as Crowther learned machine code he soon wanted a more powerful machine. It arrived in the shape of an Amiga — but his games jet, for Crowther had found a vaguely computer-related job at Thrift's Aerospace. Granted a title a Production Progress Assistant, but essentially working in stock control, he continued coding in his spare time.

Perhaps one day the rest will be history. I am Crowther becomes as famous a game man as his namesake Italy (Big Zag). But now there's no time to rest on laurels, for he's busy with Aggressor, "putting the final polish on the weapon-loading, lots and bolts here and there".

"It's troublesome in places," acknowledges Crowther — but he hopes to stay at Argonaut after the project's finished. A hard act to follow? We'll keep you informed.

# Dial A Prize!

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And, of course, there's a massive series of prizes too. This month we're offering you the chance to win a terrific GHETTOBLASTER or one of FIVE T-shirts from THALAMUS!

Each month we add more and more to this unique service – this month we've got a new PLAYING TIPS Hotline (22-8698 555867) written by our own Robin Candy!

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Here's your chance to win a fabbetrendyiff's ghettobuster

to blast the neighbours out with. And even if you don't get the first prize, you'll be in with a chance of winning an almost-as-fabbeo (but still very trendy) Thalamus T-shirt. As for the first game itself, well they're not giving any copies away, so you'll have to buy one – which means you don't need a computer to appreciate the prize!

## Prizes, information and tips!

Printed here are the numbers which connect you directly to the TGM Hotline services. And we've got 160 lines, open 24-hours a day, so don't worry about the service being engaged.

For the information you're getting, the Hotlines are cheap. The phone call will cost you 25p per minute when you call during off-peak time (Mon-Fri 6pm-8pm, Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays), or 38p per minute during standard and peak times (8am-6pm Mon-Fri).

Grab the latest news on what's happening in software by ringing TGM's News Update line. We can get hot stuff on the News Update service quicker than any magazine can get it in print – so don't lose touch, use News Update!

Games players are also well-served for... Robin Candy is working overtime and getting all the latest tips on the greatest games. So ring the Tips Hotline now, for all the help you'll ever need (almost!).

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# Home, sweet home

## EARTH/CYBERTECH SOURCEBOOK

Roleplaying supplement for 2300 AD

Published by Games Designers Workshop

There's no place like home... Yet, strangely, home — Earth, mother planet of humanity — has never until now the most poorly-covered planet of all the domains of human-inhabited worlds in GDW's 2300 AD RPG. Now at last GDW have put that right with the release of the *Earth/Cybertech Sourcebook*, bringing players and referees from the hostile reaches of the final frontier to adventure on Earth at the turn of the 24th century.

And Earth holds every bit as much excitement and danger for the intrepid adventurer as any other corner of the universe. From the remote city of Gateway, atop its 24,000-mile tower, to the shady alleys of the terrestrial metropolises and the surreal world of the Cyberspace matrix.

Two-thirds of the supplement is an overview of the politics and economics of the future Earth, starting with information about Global Governing Council — the huge net of alliances which seeks the planet from contamination by some alien plague organism. Earth visitors go through extensive quarantine procedures which are carried out at Gateway, a huge space station in geosynchronous orbit, for planets are given.

From Gateway the Earthward journey continues on the Starlanes, a miniature railway into space, connecting Gateway to the ground stations. From there, players and referees are whisked to meet Earth culture in a matter of hours — and the supplement gives the referee an outline of what might await them wherever they go.

The descriptions of the nations are bare and factual, typically less than a page each, although major nations have more extensive sections. The recent history and current economic and political situation of each country are detailed, along with a description of the nature of its society. There isn't enough detail here to provide more than the barest taste of

each nation, but that's all that's needed for a supplement of this type — providing a sound base for the referee to build on.

This is made easier because Earth has changed less than might be expected in 300 years, due to the slow recovery from the devastation of the Twilight War, atomic, for instance, suffered severely and is no longer a superpower, but its geography remains virtually unchanged.

The supplement's most exciting part — the Cyberspace section — is listed at last. Cyberspace roleplaying is here! (These adventures with Cyberspace should kick out now, watch those flames, read *Neuroscience* and buy all the back issues of *TQM*.)

The section opens with an introduction explaining Cyberspace culture, and suggests some examples of the types of character who might feature in a Cyberspace adventure, such as Cybernetics — 24th-century rangers who serve as mercenaries, assassins or bodyguards with surgical and mechanical enhancements to their bodies which make them lethal killing machines — and Technological Scavengers — the hackers or

cyberspace combat between flesh prey and the sophisticated and deadly security programs that guard secret data.

Another chapter details the range of exotic enhancements available to those who can afford them, including illegal subdermal weapons (such as the deadly monomolecular grates) and bionic eyes, nearly superior to the natural item. The booklet concludes with a Cyberspace-style adventure set

in New York.

Like most of the 2300 AD add-ons, this supplement's emphasis is on ideas for referees to develop further rather than instant action-packed material. The Cyberspace section is only 14 pages and really forms just an introduction to a topic I hope we'll see GDW take further. But there's plenty here to keep players happy, and with a little research work and some judicious borrowing from books and film sources, it should provide dozens of adventures for any group, with the Cyberspace rules taking quite literally a new dimension to roleplaying.

Strongly recommended.

## WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

Games Workshop ■ Softback edition 364 pages £9.99

Roleplaying rulebook

With a drop in price (and bulk), the repackaging changes are only cosmetic, but I do greatly prefer the new printing — the older hardback edition is satisfyingly sturdy, but its presentation was spoiled by cheap and nasty paper. The new printing is on crisp, strong paper which should serve to keep Chaos at bay a little longer!

I reviewed the original version way back in the mists of time, but the reviews merit another mention.

The contents are unchanged, with eight comprehensive chapters presenting the rules for character generation, combat, magic and so on, and providing background material.

The game is set in the Old World, a fantasy realm more closely modelled on Europe. This setting is the best part of the game for me — referees can instantly relate to the atmosphere of the part of the world they live in, and referees can borrow place-names, geography and culture straight from reality, while the fantasy element is blended in very well so that dwarves, elves, monsters and magic don't seem at all out of place. The atmosphere is enhanced by hundreds of black and white sketches throughout the text and colour plates, and the overall presentation is pretty good, with most of the important charts and tables reproduced in a reference section at the back.

The rules system is on the whole fairly simple. Combat and magic systems have a similar feel to *D&D*'s classic *Dungeons And Dragons*, with the addition of an alternative skill system. Character advancement is by means of a 'career' system in a player chooses a career, such as seaman, bodyguard or mer-



chant, which then allows the character to import particular characteristics. The actual improvements are bought from those possible using experience points awarded by the referee to successful adventurers. The career system is a nice idea in principle and works well for generating starting characters, but it subtly imposes unrealistic labels on — "Now, I need to improve my weapons skill... I know, I'll become a sea captain!"

For me, the biggest advantage is the compatibility with the excellent *Warhammer Fantasy* miniature wargaming rules, and if you want to combine fantasy roleplay with tabletop, this is probably the system for you. Otherwise this is a welcome repackaging of a simple fantasy RPG offering everything in one book. There are a few shortcomings which mean it won't be everyone's cup of tea, but it's excellent value for money and should appeal to roleplaying newcomers in particular.



Merchants get by selling cheap software

'black jobs' who earn a good living using the pathways of the Cyberspace matrix.

A section devoted to Cyberspace explains the workings of this huge computer network with its simulated alternate reality, detailing rules for



# BACK NUMBERS

## T24 T8 0129-836 12-100





# BACK

SAMPLING—

## A rich man's game no longer



The price of making electronic music's been going down and down. Now TGM reveals Future Sound, the ST sampler for little more than the cost of a game, and Master Sound, an Amiga program with 16-bit and stereo sampling for not quite twice the price.

• Page 86

### A MUG's game is longer

Communications aren't all serious when it comes to diving in with hundreds of others via a modem and playing multiplayer games.

• Page 91



### WHAT'S INSIDE

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### Improve the features

That's what this month's top letter writer says to all software houses — although his comments are aimed at the POFT manual. If Gamlin improve features, such as rewriting the manual and adjusting the difficulty level for the Amiga version, they will obviously have the best game ever on their hands.

• Page 102

### To be cancelled due to lack of interest

Fast Street really isn't interested in computer gaming, preferring obscure sports much more. But as TGM discovers, some IPH people in the business think the major software houses are to blame for the lack of newspaper coverage and support.

• Page 100

INDUSTRY: WE WANT YOUR PRODUCT NEWS! CALL BACK BYTES  
EDITORIAL Robin Candy ■ ADVERTISING Lee Watkins ■ 0284 5951

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TGM019

## SAMPLERS ■

## Cheap at twice the price

**Samplers for the ST normally roll in around the £80-100 mark — cheap compared to professional hardware, yet an expensive mistake if you discover you're not really that interested in the whole sampling lark.**

But now Software Horizons have released a sampler for little more than the cost of a game. In the first of our sampling features, Robin Candy reviews Master Sound.

The best news about Master Sound is, of course, that £49.95 will buy all the hardware and software you need to start sampling: the only extras required are the leads to connect your ST up to a sound source and a bit. It's not cheap and nasty, either, for Master Sound comes of a good family: it was designed and programmed by 3-De Systems and Perry Rowell, both previously responsible for Synapse 4 on the ST and

packages. Master Sound will include all the usual editing facilities plus a number of extra features, making it the best value-for-money sampler yet.

Sound can be sampled at 5.28kHz — the higher the frequency is, the better the quality, but this limits sample length. The maximum length of a sample depends on a combination of frequency setting and the memory of your ST, but a 528KTFM set at 20kHz can easily produce 20 seconds of sample time.

Master Sound includes a number of options to analyse a sound before you sample it. A 3kHz spectrum analyser displays the volume levels of the different frequencies which make up a

sound, an oscilloscope shows the sound's waveform, and a real-time VU meter shows the

overall volume of a sound. (This can be set so that recording won't start till a particular volume is reached.)

Once a sound has been recorded into the ST, it can be stored in a number of ways.

■ For a start, recorded sound can be discarded.

■ A magnification facility provides 250 levels of magnification, making editing much easier.

■ Any part of the sample can be block-copied to another section to produce a Max Headroom stereo effect.

■ The overlap function mixes two samples together. If you overlap two identical samples and make sure they're slightly out of sync, you get an echo effect.

■ The whole sample or any part of it can be looped, reversed, or faded in or out.

■ If the pitch is all wrong you can decrease or increase it by up to half an octave either way.

## Sequencing too

One of Master Sound's main selling features is the built-in option to sequence samples. Memory permitting, up to 16 edited samples can be assigned their own playback key. The samples can then be played back in real time. This is great for creating your own versions of your favourite songs. Your own sequence can be up to an incredible 20 minutes long! This sequence is also editable, and allows for other samples to be

deleted over the top.

Computers can be played back independently of the sampling software, using another program included in the package. This features an editable scrolling message and animated graphics which can be altered using Cyberpaint. (Software Horizons are running a competition where owners of Master Sound can win £1,000 by sending them their 'demo'.)

Master Sound features most of the options you'd expect from a sampler costing around £100, as well as a few useful extras — the only serious omission is the lack of MIDI support. It's a shame the ST's built-in MIDI ports couldn't have been put to good use. However, it's very easy to use, and the manual includes all the necessary information to get the sample working in STOS BASIC as well as a number of other languages.

So Master Sound represents great value for money. The sample sequence alone is great fun to play with and can produce some very interesting results.

Available on ST from Software Horizons, 4 Oakleigh Mews, London SW20 8QH (01 490-9145).

There are plans for an Amiga version, but no firm release dates yet.

## You ain't heard nuthin' yet!

For to week month's TCM, Jason Statham returns the latest sampler from top Commodore company Teflon. Listen out for Back Bytes in TCM200, on sale June 22.



AMAD on the Amiga.

And though it's almost 50% cheaper than their previous

Amiga version of Master Sound would undoubtedly find a major rival in the slick Future Sound from Applied Visions. While at £79.95 it's almost double the cost, 3FF compatibility and stereo sampling make it an attractive package.

Recording a sound is very easy — just plug your sound source into the stereo RCA phono sockets at the 3-DeM MIC socket. Adjust the slider control on top of the sampler to set the recording level, then click on the record option.

Future Sound can cope with mono or stereo samples, and when switched to mono mode it can sample up to 40kHz — compared to 20kHz

## Bright future for Amiga sound

in stereo. As always, sample length depends on a combination of free memory and sample frequency.

When a sample has been recorded, it's assigned its own track along with the sample name. There are four tracks, each with their own volume, playback rate and one-loop controls. They can be played all together or in any combination.

The Bag Of Tricks menu contains all the sound modification options. The normal features such as reverse, copy and mix sounds are found on this menu, and some allows you to create a totally silent section in the sample, and some more to

used to make sections louder or softer. All the options on this menu can be used on all or part of a sample.

Samples can be saved out in two formats — either Future Sound's own, which is compatible with the public-domain music program Jukebox, or in 3FF which is the standard music format used by many music packages including Electronic Arts' Deluxe Music Construction Set.

If a sample is saved in 3FF, there are two additional options on the menu intended for sound effects and speech: the sample is played exactly as it was saved with no alterations in pitch. And reverse is

intended for sounds which are to be used as musical notes.

The manual explains all the options very clearly, making Future Sound easy to use. Full instructions on how to use the sampler in your own programs are also included.

Altogether, Future Sound is one of the best sound sampling packages available for the Amiga, and owners of 3FF music packages will certainly find it very useful and at £79.95 it's definitely worth buying.

Applied Visions: Jason Statham, 100-100 Whippendell Road, Watford, Herts WD1 2JM (0494) 818076.

MAIL ORDER

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Journal of Internal Medicine 247: 355–362

Call: 800-855-8888 or 800-855-8888 or 800-855-8888

[illegible][illegible]

1. **Project Overview:** The project aims to develop a web application for managing a library's book inventory. The application will allow users to view, search, and manage books, including adding new books, updating existing ones, and deleting books.

2. **Project Goals:** The primary goal is to create a user-friendly interface for managing the library's book inventory. The application should be able to handle a large number of books and provide a fast and efficient search function.

3. **Project Scope:** The project will focus on developing a web application that runs on a standard web browser. The application will be built using a modern web framework and will be hosted on a cloud platform.

4. **Project Deliverables:** The project will deliver a fully functional web application that can be used by library staff and patrons. The application will include a user interface, a database, and a set of APIs for managing the book inventory.

5. **Project Risks:** The project may face several risks, including a lack of resources, a change in requirements, and a delay in the project timeline. The project team will monitor these risks and take steps to mitigate them.

6. **Project Timeline:** The project is expected to be completed within a 12-week period. The timeline will be broken down into several phases, including planning, development, testing, and deployment.

7. **Project Budget:** The project budget is estimated to be \$10,000. This budget will cover the costs of development, testing, and deployment.

8. **Project Team:** The project team consists of a project manager, a developer, a tester, and a user representative. The project manager will be responsible for overseeing the project and ensuring that it is completed on time and within budget.

9. **Project Communication:** The project team will use a combination of email, instant messaging, and face-to-face meetings to communicate. The project manager will provide regular updates to the project team and stakeholders.

10. **Project Conclusion:** The project is expected to be a success, as it will provide a user-friendly interface for managing the library's book inventory. The project team will continue to monitor the application and make improvements as needed.

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**STAY ON TOP OF THE LATEST TRENDS IN THE MARKET**

[illegible]

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# GUIDE TO REPAIR SERVICES

No matter how much you care for a computer, eventually something goes wrong — and you can bet your life it'll happen after the guarantee has expired, so you can't forget about sending it back to the manufacturer. In most cases, they won't want to know.

Before packing your computer off to a repair firm, check to see if your local computer dealer or PC technician is a local repair outfit.

Choose the company you choose and try to get a rough guide to the kind of the repair. How long it will take — and whether they'll give a warranty to do it again for free if the repair doesn't work.

**■ K1 Computer Services.**  
Unit 8, Paddock Street Offices,  
Sewley, Telford, Shropshire  
TF1 3TH (0952) 850171

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED**  
Virtually any computer —  
including Spectrums, C4A/128,  
BBC, M-series, C18, Wa20 and  
Plus 4.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers; also full disk drive  
service for £25.

**PRICES** Monthly £25-£30, but  
£150 in 141 90.  
**WARRANTY** Three months.

**■ BSL (Best) Computers Ltd.**  
Galaxy Audio Visual, Unit 300,  
129 Prescotway, Canal Road,  
London W1A 3AP (01) 611-  
0719 or 582-6882

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** All 8-bit  
and 16-bit including PCs.  
**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** All.  
**PRICES** A typical small repair  
would cost £15-£20.

**WARRANTY** Six months.  
**INFORMATION** Free estimates.  
Galaxy Audio Visual also sell  
micros.

**■ Cambridge Micro Supplies.**  
Unit 4, 307B Cherry House  
Road, Cambridge CB1 4BB  
(0223) 410234

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED**  
Spectrum, C4A, BBC, Acorn, etc.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers, monitors, disk  
drives etc.

**PRICES** Cheapest in 488.  
Spectrum at £28 95 plus cost of  
parts; others from £23 95.

**WARRANTY** Three months.  
**INFORMATION** Will provide  
actual information for free  
even without, 08 41 contract.

Make sure that the quoted  
price includes parts, labour,  
VAT, and return postage.

When sending your computer  
by post, pack it carefully —  
preferably in the original box.

Always include a letter with  
your name, address, and tele-  
phone number and the effects of  
the fault.

Send the whole package by  
registered delivery — just 24p  
on top of the stamp cost —  
and pay the extra cash for an  
advanced delivery rate £250 if  
you ask for it when you post  
the package. 85p if you leave  
it till later.

That way you know it's got  
there.

**■ The Computer Factors.**  
Avonlin Engineering Ltd, Unit  
18A, Cranston Road Industrial  
Estate, Beudon Hill, SO2  
(0703) 616995

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** All  
major models except AAA.  
**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** Disk  
drives and printers.

**PRICES** £7-£28.  
**WARRANTY** Three months.

**INFORMATION** Free estimates.

**■ Electronic & Computer  
Services.**  
1008 Chelmsford Road, Hayes,  
Middlesex UB4 9PL  
(01) 873 2708

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** The full  
range of home computers —  
that includes all the well-  
known 8-bit and 16-bit  
models.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Electronic & Computer  
Services will repair most  
peripherals, but write or phone  
for details in case yours isn't  
included.

**PRICES** According to the prob-  
lems. Phone for a quote.

**WARRANTY** Write or phone for  
details. The warranty only cov-  
ers the problems reported, not  
the whole computer.

**INFORMATION** Turnaround  
times, depending on the prob-  
lem, from two days to a week.

**Electronic & Computer  
Services** also sell spare parts.  
Again, write or phone for  
details.

**■ Winley Electronics.**  
37 Market Street, Stockley  
Wagon, Llanelli WND 1AA  
(0454) 507740

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED**  
Spectrum, C18/4, Wa20, CPC.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** Some.  
**PRICES** Set price for each  
machine, ranging from £17  
1885 Spectrum to £225 10441  
disk drive C12 80.

**WARRANTY** Three months.  
**INFORMATION** Average two-day  
turnaround — well quicker  
than the average.

**■ W5 Computer Services.**  
Unit 5, The Cedars, Wroth,  
Trenton, Lancashire PR1 1BX  
(0712) 533588

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** All  
Spectrum.  
**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** Floppy  
drives from £14 95.

**WARRANTY** Three months.

**■ Lashmore Computing  
Associations.**  
33 Commercial Road, Preston,  
Lancashire PR1 3QP  
(0772) 21494 or 2038

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** Mainly  
Acorn.  
**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers and disk drives.

**PRICES** According to machine  
— for example ST £24 50,  
EL/120 £2 £23 (these prices  
include VAT).

**WARRANTY** Phone for informa-  
tion.

**■ Microsoft Computer Services.**  
274 278 Colton Exchange  
Building, Old Hall Street,  
Liverpool L3 9LA  
(051) 236 2308

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** ST,  
Amiga, BBC, Amstrad.  
**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers, monitors, also electric  
typewriters and other office  
equipment.

**PRICES** Start from £30 — call  
Mike Lopez at Microsoft for a  
quote.

**WARRANTY** Three months.

**■ MP Electronics.**  
Wendling, Dursley, North  
Hants RG3 2JG (0893) 850127

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED**  
Spectrum, C4A, BBC B, PCs —  
in fact all major makes except  
ST and Amiga.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers, plotters, monitors,  
disk drives etc.

**PRICES** All inclusive prices for  
most machines — 488  
Spectrum £15, 1280 Spectrum,  
BBC B and C64 £27 95, PCs  
from £24-£300. These rates  
cover all faults except those  
caused by other people's  
botched repairs.

**WARRANTY** Phone for  
information.

**INFORMATION** Free estimates.  
£20 repair and overhead service  
for 488 Spectrum — MP  
Electronics replace sockets,  
keyboard membranes etc and  
will repair any fault the  
desktop within six hours of  
overhead.

**■ Data Micro Computers.**  
18C CEC ITIC, 68C British  
Qas, Distribution Division,  
Highgate Electronics, Manchester

M13 1PL (061) 261-4220.  
**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** All  
home micros and PCs.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers, monitors and disk  
drives.

**PRICES** Depends on fault —  
phone for details.  
**WARRANTY** Three months.

**■ PM Engineering.**  
Unit 6, New Road, St Leon,  
Cardiff CF11 9SD  
(0496) 511394

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** All  
home computers.  
**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED**  
Printers, monitors and disk  
drives.

**PRICES** Phone. There's a set  
repair price for each computer,  
regardless of the fault and  
including all parts and labour.

**WARRANTY** Three months.

**■ PM Electronics.**  
123 London Road South,  
Lewesport, Suffolk, NR33 6AX  
(0420) 194339

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED** All  
Spectrum.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** Floppy  
drives from £28, £15,  
Spectrum 1280 £20.

**INFORMATION** R.A. Electronics  
also sell components.

**■ Robtek Design.**  
Victory Works, Park Hill,  
Leamworth, Northampton NN6  
1EX (0432) 480735 or 480835

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** Robtek  
Design run a clever postcard-  
replacement system which  
often takes less than a  
regular firm would.

Send in your broken postcard  
— any model — and they'll  
send back a second-hand but  
working stick of the same  
model. Later, they repair yours  
and pass it on to another cus-  
tomer.

**PRICES** £4.50 including return  
postage.

**■ Solution ITIC.**  
4 Dordanside Centre,  
Greenbridge Road, Swanton  
SD3 1JG (0763) 453908

**COMPUTERS REPAIRED**  
Spectrum, C4A/128, BBC B  
and Master series, CPC.

**PERIPHERALS REPAIRED** 5.25-  
inch disk drives, monitors,  
cassette-deck, aligned.

**PRICES** Spectrum from £35, others  
from £10 (but small repairs  
may be charged).

**WARRANTY** Three months.

**INFORMATION** Most done within  
seven working days.

## Attention ! repair firms !

If you want the a mention in  
the Back Bytes repair pages,  
please send the relevant  
details to: Back Bytes, 195B,  
PO Box 23, Ladbroke, Warwick-  
shire CV3 5BE. Including a photo  
of the firm and the manager's  
name (for our files).





## COMMS ■

## It's a mug's game

The more the merrier — that's the secret of multiuser games, where dozens of players share the same adventures through a mystical modem link.

In this month's comms commentary, Zag gets bitten by a giant spider... and that's nothing compared to the phone bill.

**F**ate to ensure will assured, multiuser games are a regular visit. Well, according to my calculations, sometime around now we should hit the incident when approximately 180 player years have been spent on exploring, playing, testing and interacting with the main multiuser games (MUGs) around the country.

In other words, assuming that MUGs have only been around for about three years, some 180 players exist somewhere in the country who have spent their entire lives since early 1988 playing a three-hour shift every day, come rain or shine. The odds of games vary, but assuming an average 100 per hour — the cost of Dials and Dials — someone could have earned in the region of £180,000 per year for the last three years.

Why this addition? As with

anything new, at first you'll probably be rather daunted by the whole experience. Strange personae shouting, long room descriptions and weird items that cause something to overgrow except you... Screens full of text also tend to obscure the single line in the middle that tells you about the spider that just arrived at the room and bit you, and even if you did see it you haven't the foggiest how to cure yourself before your character dies horribly.

For this sort of thing, it's useful to have experience in ordinary multiuser adventures such as *The Pines*, *The Hobbit*, or *Castle of Thieves* (called *BUGs*, or single-user games, in the jargon).

The commands that let you drive your 'person' around a MUG are a lot like the original adventure, *Colossal Cave*. First is enter the ten basic direction movements (n, s, e, w, ne, nw, se, sw, u, d), 'look' (l) and your possessions, or 'inventory' (i). Next then, good ideas from one game have often been added to others, either because the order likes them or because players requested them. (The last is the content-happy technique.)

For example, the description of a room is commonly done as a long piece of text, which may have lines of colour. Players who wish to rise above that don't want all the text, so our creator the game to just print a couple of words instead, simply saying which room you're in.

If you're not sure about this location, the command 'l' ('look') will give you the full description anyway. And any other people or objects in the room with you will get listed, after the room text. Since a game usually tells you what everyone is carrying if you enter a room but often fails to



tell you if they enter a room that you're already in, the 'quit' command (q) has evolved — it gives a brief room description and then a full description of the players with you.

Another rich field of cross-fertilisation is in the interactions between players. The early quit, set, and leave commands have been supplemented with a vocabulary like this:

NAME CHASED BY  
COWBOY WENT AWAY  
COWBOY SET AND WENT AWAY  
COWBOY SETTING  
WENT AWAY FROM ROOM

If these are not all available, or if there's another reaction you wish to display which doesn't yet exist, the users or the command is often a general catch-all. You can type *cowboy* and the other person near you will get something like *see you*.

A MUG is partly a technical

exercise for programmers, since it requires various skills and a real-time response. (The original MUG was written just to demonstrate some programming techniques for a university lecture and students.)

But it's also a sort of acting, where you can be whatever character you like, regardless of your (real) sex, class, age, race, shape or accent. You can play off being characters or personas that are nothing like the 'real' you, just to see what it's like, or to experiment with some of your hidden sides without embarrassment. The social side of some games is that key reason why people keep coming back again and again.

Finally, of course, there's the gameplay — collecting points and testing against, solving logical puzzles and exploring the game's universe. You could do it for a hundred years, and still not be bored.

## MAJOR MUGS

- **ADSP (0202) 878632.** Coverage/weekends.
- **Colossal (0453) 273446.** Coverage/Thursday.
- **Code (01) 284-9119.** 24 hours a day. Run by Tiger Tiger. Zone is set on the same number.
- **Minerworld (0602) 844044 or 844164.** 24 hours a day. Run by Pippin.
- **MSMA (041) 434-9927.** Evenings/weekends.
- **Manstead (03) 889-6228.** 24 hours a day. Run by Ted Green, aka Mansta the Arkh WOLF.
- **Zone (01) 284-9119.** 24 hours a day. Originally free and based in Corydon, Zone is now on the Code system in London, with 14 sites. Run by Corndell.
- **Shades, via Pippin,** with a scrolling gateway too, as 'shades'.

## Pique time: what it costs

The big problem for MUG players in this country is the cost of comms. It can take several hundred hours to establish a MUG, build a real, tested and successful version of the main character, and learn what and where is dangerous in the 'life' of your persona. Because most games are free, the money paid out for all this adventuring through a service last goes entirely to British Telecom.

You do very slowly think you, just installing a couple of lines and watching the meter clock up. And, of course, if you live in a remote part of the country you'll never long distance charges.

The only exceptions are games on networks such as *Shivers* and *Colossal*, which have local numbers for just about the entire country. This is brilliant, all you realise, you're paying up a minute to play *Shades*!

At the other end of the spectrum are the small games run by enthusiasts. They may be fun to play, but they probably have only a couple of lines and be a bit crummy.

Of course, getting to know everybody (if you can get on a system with only two lines) will probably be easier, and you may be interested in helping debug or code the game itself, rather than just playing it.

[illegible]



# INFORMATION DESK

The ST is miles better than the Amiga. No, on second thoughts it's the other way round. Well, what about the SAM, then... hack your way through the upgrade jungle in this month's Information Desk, as the Back Bytes experts solve some toughies.

## Which micro?

I have a budget of £250 to spend on a new computer system but I can't seem to make my mind up on which one to buy. I would really use my computer to play games, but I'd also like to design graphics. The options I'm considering are the MIB II, MIBT SAM Coupe, C64 and PC Engine. **2 Cudde, Walthamstow**

If you're looking to do serious graphics work as well as games playing, you're really got to get just the ST or Amiga, which are a little above your price limit (though you can easily find a second-hand model around £200 — look in the TQM Classifieds).

On paper the SAM Coupe looks very impressive: a better sound chip than the Amiga, graphics to rival an ST, 256K RAM, a built-in disk drive and a Spectra-compatible board. However, few people have yet seen it in action. And while the Coupe is compatible with existing Spectrum software, there is no guarantee that software

houses will write to exploit the Coupe's other modes.

The Coupe is expected to be released in September (see this month's cover).

The C64 is getting on a bit more, but the sheer number of add-on software packages support for a few years yet. Second-hand machines can be picked up quite cheaply, and there's a vast bank of magazines of excellent games, many of which are available as cheap re-releases. It's also a good low-cost computer for designing graphics: there are excellent art utilities as well as a large library of public-domain pictures.

The MIBT is a large range of games, mainly arcade conversions, many of which are very good. But though there are many more in Japan, the machine's never been popular here — so you may find it hard to get hold of software, peripherals and repair services.

The PC Engine is one of the new breed of games machines where the games look and play exactly like their arcade counterparts. Software costs around £20-30 per game and so far only a few games are available in the UK, but we expect more. But if you're really keen on designing graphics forget the Engine — it's a games machine only.



See how two dots go on Seeing Double

## Seeing double

I have been wondering if it would be possible for me to connect my Amiga A500 to two TVs. If so, what would I need to do this? **Paul Thorne, Borough Green**

All you need is an aerial splitter and a couple of aerial leads. Your local TV store should be able to supply you with both. Plug the splitter into the Amiga module, then connect the leads to the TVs, and you should have double vision double vision.

## Wasting £100?

I have owned an Amstrad CPC464 since they were first released and it has given me many hours of pleasure. However, I feel that it is less than superseded by the 16-bit computers. I'm interested in buying an ST or Amiga but I've heard conflicting reports about both machines. Is the Amiga worth the extra £100? **Carl Eddow, Wolverhampton**

As far as games are concerned, there's little difference between the two machines: often Amiga games are ported straight from the ST, because they have the same central processor (a Motorola 68000). So if you're going to use your machine mainly for playing games, the ST should suffice.

Where applications are concerned, the choice depends on exactly what you want to do. The Amiga does

have better graphics and sound, which makes it first choice for art and music packages. Moreover, the ST's built-in MIDI ports allow it to be connected to music equipment such as synthesizers, sequencers and drum machines. Of course, you can get MIDI interfaces for the Amiga, but it will increase the cost of your setup.

For word processing and DTP the ST is perhaps more popular than the Amiga, while amateur programmers tend to favour the Amiga because of the custom chips and more sophisticated operating system.



## Fantasy seeker

In TQM808 you reviewed the Fantasy Wars RPG. Where can I get hold of a copy? **Kevia Ellis, Stoke-on-Trent**

Your best bet is to try Games Workshop, who stock most fantasy RPGs. They can be contacted on (0772) 760721.

**Reviewed by bit daisy? Defeated by database? Flattened by too many routines? Agggh! Send all your computing queries to Information Desk, TQM, PO Box 16, Ludlow, Shropshire ST9 1LB.**

## ST to TV

I own an Atari 520STxm and a Hisense CRT-1446 colour TV with RGB input. What type of lead would I need to connect the ST to the TV's RGB DIN socket, and would I be able to get sound output? **Gustavo Jimeno, Charlton**

If you take the consumer nearest specifications of the ST's audio output and the Hisense RGB DIN socket along to your local TV store, they should be able to make up a lead for you (or a few pounds). Alternatively, you can phone Hisense with your problem and they should also be able to make up a lead for you.

The ST computer includes a sound-out pin, while the TV RGB socket includes a sound-in pin, so you should be able to get sound through your TV. **Hisense: (01) 666-8767.**

## TOOLBOX ■ Products and news to make life bearable

## AMIGA

## 3-D anims — under £50

The range of Amiga animation (CGIM018) continues with Artisan's C-Light, providing real-time 3-D animation for just £49.95.

Complex scenes can be constructed quickly by combining simple shapes such as cylinders and cubes, which can then be stretched, squashed or rotated using the built-in brush commands.

C-Light also includes ray-tracing commands — used to produce true shadows, mirror surfaces, multiple light sources, and fish-eye and telephoto-lens effects. And with the 3-D editor you can rotate scenes and view them from any angle, as well as zoom in and out.

The entire package, including two disks and tutorials, should be available now in very short.

**ARTISAN:** 3-D Haynes Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8HQ (0423) 526325.

## ATARI ST

## Sequence and ye shall find

Severed ever the Back Bytes feature on sequencers? Now MCM Development have acquired the UK distribution rights for Real Time from Intelligent Music. The C100 ST sequencing package offers up to 255 tracks and looks set to rival Steinberg's Pro 24. **MCM Distribution:** 9 Manor Street, London NW9 3TJ 733 8704.

## PC • P&amp;E

## Scan dol

Logitech have converted their Mac image-crawler to the PC (C100) and P&E (C200) — and it should work with nearly all printers. Most printers, including lasers, can only cope with 360 dots per inch (dpi). So the new improved ScanMan features an adjustable resolution from 100dpi up to 400dpi.

**Logitech:** 169-170 Widdowson Close, Warrington, Warrington WA5 6JL (01924) 412601.

## AMIGA • PC

## Viruses get the boot

The virus-killers are fast catching up with their data-devouring targets — and Watchdog Security Software and Practical Software are among the latest to release antivirus programs.

**Watchdog's** *Steppable* (C100) is a virus detection program for the PC that resides in RAM without interfering with your program. Once installed, the program prevents all known viruses from entering the system, as well as accidental damage of files.

**Practical's** *Amiga Virus Killer* (C100) comes with an end-onset.

From Commodore, it includes an up-to-date database of all known viruses, and can also learn to keep you warned from new strains.

When *Virus Killer* detects the presence of an unwanted virus, it kills it and also repairs any damage done to your data.

**Watchdog Security Software:** 1 Chesham Grove, London SW2 6SH (01) 448-9198.

**Practical PD Kings:** Ford Capersway Road, London E15 2AP (01) 553 2818.

## AMIN ST

## DTP gains a star with Calamus

Is time running out for LaserWriter? Electric Bookstore's ST DTP package, long regarded as leading the field, should soon face stiff competition from Calamus, now imported by Capsonet.

Calamus, actually produced by ST manufacturers Aten, but not officially available here, offers all the usual DTP features along with a host of extras. Text can be made to sit at any angle, a special text editor is included, and graphics can be imported in a variety of formats including Degas and IMG.

But Calamus is aimed at people who are really serious about DTP — it requires a minimum of 1Mb RAM and ideally 4Mb RAM, a hard disk, an A3 monitor and a 24-pin or laser printer.

At £299.95 the import is £140 cheaper than the current UK version, but it doesn't benefit from the latest improvements and includes several well-known bugs. So it's better to wait until you're best advised to wait till Calamus is officially released.

**Calamus Ltd:** 2, row of 7 Wellington Road, Stockport, Surrey SK17 6AW (0161) 971621.

## AMIGA • ST • PC • SPECTRUM • BBC

## MGT pass their driving tests!

Changing computers doesn't mean throwing away your disk drive, thanks to Miles Gordon Technology (MGT). For the south-Wales-based firm, famous for their Spectrum peripherals and soon to be terminated SAGE micro, have developed a drive that works with ST, Amiga, PC, Spectrum and BBC.

It's a good example of how a well-used idea develops into a product, says MGT boss Alan Miles. Micro owners used to ring up the company asking whether they could use, say, a Spectrum drive with their new ST. And, of course, the answer was always no.

Now MGT's new drive, which is available in both 2.5-inch and 5.25-inch ver-

sions, features neatly-adjustable DTP switches which you set to configure the drive for your machine (like a printer).

Special cables are available to connect the drive to different micro models. Buy a new computer, and all you need to do is flip the DTP switches and fit a new cable.

Already available is a 2.5-inch drive with internal power supply, costing £119.95. A 2.5-inch using an external power supply will be coming out soon, at £55 or £115 less — this is suitable for the Amiga.

And the 5.25-inches should be available and they — again, with either internal or external power supply.

Cables cost £18.50 for the 16-bit machines, and £10 for the Spectrum and BBC.

**MGT:** Lakeside, Phoenix Way, Swansage, Warrington Park, Swansage SA7 8BN (0793) 781303.

SAGE updates: see news.

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# CONTROVERSY

## Hold the front page!

...just don't put any games on it. Barnaby Page finds fault with what the papers say.

**T**hree out of 19 didn't list it, however. That's the number of national newspapers that actually chose to cover computing news and again. Out of all Britain's national press, when considered to be (at least in its version) the best in the world, only *The Guardian*, the *Financial Times* and the *Sunday Times* saw regular columns on what is arguably the biggest lifestyle change of the past decade: the personal computer. Is it at odds, school or home?

Why? How anybody's asking for hundreds of pages, that it seems odd what you consider the number of columns taken given over to cover the same subject appears in. The independent, particularly, to high tuition (which is the pleasure of a very few very rich people), even to class.

The problem is not uniquely British, of course, though our media across the water is the co-existence North American

press tend to take their computing more seriously. I remember the imperative situation at my first paper. There, as one of Canada's major lifestyle studies, Pulitzer Prize-winning, packed with some 180 editorial staff, the weekly computing column was given as a sideline. In the agriculture correspondent. After the time the Apple, Apple and Bull ran to blame for this misadventure, the bull didn't.

Back here, one leading public-affairs man who needs for many important, home-schooled hardware and software companies has repeatedly tried to get papers like the *Sunday Times* interested in the games world. But, he complains, the national press don't seem to know what computer games are. They will tend to write off when you mention computer games to them. They think it's something very, very young kids are interested in. The last loop — a place that's already passed.



Streets apart: the Fleet Street press don't seem to understand what games are all about

Why? After all, there must be people on Fleet Street with an Amiga in the family. But every day thousands of stories are vying for space in the national, and the FT men are much at the home on software houses for not really bothering to get games that attention they deserve. To be perfectly honest with you, he says — and FT people are always perfectly honest — I think it's partly the software house's fault. They don't put enough money into trying to get stuff into Fleet Street. The companies ready to blame are people like Games and US Gold, who are big enough to spend the money required but don't it is possible, so Code Masters have shown — but it takes time.

At Code Masters — the people who considered enough long to get themselves into publication in *Games* at *Times*, *FT*, *Management Today* and *Performance* (or *Games* window has it that the great, Code Masters press coverage of 1987 was designed to promote a games console which they never released, whereas pressed on this, the Coders will only laugh and decline to comment, which most definitely is as good as a yes.

But what of those Code Masters columnists ready about computers? Our interviewee FT

man disagrees: Is a way Code Masters started, because it wasn't really computers, it was kids making a lot of noise.

Now that's what WE did once, once. It isn't enough that millions of people use a game every day, it isn't enough that a single game like *MicroProse's* *Wings* TV can sell over 400,000 copies worldwide (more than many movie-screeners over time), or a single journal (the *Essex* *Speeding*) that its very title had a million weekly readers. So, it takes the generosity of the institutions dealing to somebody to realise that regular status can be as valuable as rock stars (even hammer-swinging ones), and therefore worth writing about.

Mirrored's *Times* recent considerable coverage because of its popular engine when played, was famous of the month it's the only game I've seen referred to in my local Birmingham Post. Amiga's *Leisure* but Larry even at the FT — where games critics spend a vast through City banking companies. Games's *Financial* made *Radio* (or *Newsweek* — but then it was a game of a film).

TV has provided perhaps the best coverage, and that's not surprising when you consider how visual games are. Both *Bandwidth's* *World* *Games* and *Antenna's* *Time* *Games* (premiered this week) have appeared on *Motorworld*. Channel 4 made a brave start at examining games in an episode of the *History* *Repeat* (programme series this spring, but made the mistake of treating it as a feature lobby, the presence of a few big backers, rather than mainstream news item).

The BBC's one-off *Software Show* was another first attempt in recent history at getting to grips with computers (the excellent and long-running *Tomorrow's World* apart), and composed one editorial paper to wonder whether we really need a whole hour devoted to talking old bits and bytes. What really says it all.

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## FOFT must flop? Your opinion

### ■ Dear TGM

Following your recent review of FOFT (TGM117) I would like to raise some points. TGM is one of the major magazines available and therefore should be read by programmers and software buyers. This would mean that a company like Geemlin Graphics would see that the major magazines did not rate the IT version of FOFT too highly and would note all the bad points raised by the magazines.

Now, TGM said that if the game was not so hard etc, it would probably be the best game available to date. So if Geemlin improved upon these features, such as reversing the manual, adjusting some difficulty etc for when the Amiga version is released, they would certainly have the best game ever on their hands.

Geemlin could turn sound and say it would cost too much money to do this, but I thought software houses were always saying that they want to offer good value for money — so this should be no problem.

Geemlin have got a program which would make them a lot of money when released on the Amiga if it is good enough to justify getting spending £30 on it. If not, the Federation of Free Traders could have had to be

the Flog of Free Traders. Geemlin have no excuse for releasing a substandard piece of software unless they are either too greedy or too lazy. I doubt they are either, but time will tell.  
**Matthew Altos, Norwich**

To be fair to Geemlin, it seems unlikely that they were aware of the big FOFT problems we highlighted in the other reviews. After all, as TGM117's review noted, they withdrew FOFT from the shops more to correct disc-saving problems, if they'd known otherwise in the other fault, they could have fixed it then.

And if it's not entirely okay for a company like Geemlin to change a game after final reviews appear, it had been advertised, distributed and readers had been notified, duplication facilities had been arranged, and so on. Geemlin did what they had to do, consequently, they released the game. We did what we had to do: we told you what we thought of it. Geemlin have taken note of some criticisms, anyway; see this month's news.

### ■ Dear TGM

Re Surge IT, what a cover story! This must be the first time I have ever seen a cover picture that hasn't led to a price-added preview of

some new and gloriously marketable product. To be truthful, however, it does seem to highlight a major flaw in a lot of games released these days — the presentation and packaging improve but the gameplay is just a dim memory, something that used to excite when you had a Spectrum.

Nevertheless, you can't swing a catwalk for the number of shoot-'em-ups, beat-'em-ups and plate cookies flying around.

So to mention F-16 simulators — what on earth is someone going to load the F-17 as the software producers can give us something else to crash land at March 29?

Only kashtans ever got it right when, in giving us Carrier Command, they created something that was 'realistic' but also as highly playable — with the crane moving slow enough so at least you got to see some very impressive filled 3-D effects, even if you couldn't blow them to kingdom come.

Why do so many companies copy mindless shoot-'em-ups, when they could follow in the footsteps of recognised classics like Carrier Command?

Meanwhile, everyone will be making games consoles after the staggeringly high positive response of the Amiga Multi-System con-

tinued feed mixer and other d'arn. This 'blue screen' seems set to slaughter the games console market — just as Sir Clive Sinclair increased the delivery time each week, the Amiga seems to require a new and unique feature.

Only when it's actually on sale will I believe it, and only if the games are original, fun and playable with 1 minute buying time.  
**Stephen Graham, Ceshire**

We'd disagree that 'original', fun and 'playable' always go together. *Chameleon's Pac-Man*, for example, was a straightforward adaptation of a very old game, but highly fun and addictive. *Invincible's Dollars* was very original, and maybe playable, but surely not quite 'fun'.

We agree, though, that clones of *3-Type* and *op-eds* are a bore... unless they improve on the original.

### ■ Dear TGM

Looking at FOFT on paper, it undoubtedly appears to be the clone-buster many claim it to be, a seminal game, a milestone in game development, a classic, piece of the past, etc.

However, it seems it was left to TGM, and TGM alone, to reveal the truth and the flaws in FOFT. It seems there is at least a magazine which

serves its readers and the public as a whole rather than the industry, advertisers and PR types.

Surely there is something wrong and sinister in this. There are virtually hundreds of computer-oriented mags available; how many of their readers will be looking out ERM for a piece of flawed software?

**OS Cooper, HM Young  
Outdoors Illustration,  
Portland, Dorset**

To be fair to other magazines which you hate to feel, several have given ERMPT fairly negative reviews since TGM's cover story appeared. Media company directors are almost invariably a load of old Ores (but then we would say that, wouldn't we...)

#### ■ Dear TGM

Thank you for your dreadful article on POPT. As one who has spent many a boring while trying to chase with planets in *Elite*, I have no wish to repeat the experience in a worse form. This is how games reviewing should be: no other reviews are just a quick because of a casual hour's play, without identifying deeper problems with the structure of a game.

However, I would like issue with your claim that "POPT must flop". Ought to flop, perhaps, but unless the public goes out to destroy and miss it, it will. But then design warnings from all quarters. I doubt one bad review will dent sales that much.

**Roger Mason, Edinburgh**

We were using "must" in the sense that players use it when they say **MAJOR MUST GO**.

POPT ought to flop, but probably won't, considering the minimal impact of media comment on market response or heavily promoted product sold 50 on the cover.

retailer in the city where I was at college, and the shop were very helpful with any problems I had.

Unfortunately, in late August a fault developed with the right-hand mouse button, which was irritating and made playing *Landboard* very difficult! No problems, I thought, it's still under guarantee...

I returned to the shop with my ST only to be told that it would have to be repaired by their own repair department, a two-day job. A guess that I had moved 180 miles away and would have to make another special journey to pick it up—no no no, and I was told "That's not our problem".

I'd have been happy with a replacement mouse, but no, they had to be replaced as well. I left the shop minus my computer and very angry, made worse by reading an article in TGM about how reliable STs were!

I recovered my computer with a functioning mouse but a few months later the left button failed and the computer developed a power-supply problem. On this occasion I phoned the shop's repair department direct and they suggested they would try to repair it while I waited, which they did. They also told me they didn't usually repair mice, since they had replace them with a new one...



So this letter is a warning. Find out before you buy what happens if your computer breaks down... it may happen to you!

**Mark Fairweather,  
Dorchester**

Nobody's entitled by law to have equipment repaired free (unless it's faulty when you buy it, in which case it's covered by the Sale of Goods Act). So always check the guarantee/warranty period when you buy something,

and check the guarantee/return policy on any repairs, too!

Each month, *Black Byte* lists about 20 specialist micro repair centres across the country, and they may often be more helpful than shops (whose main business is selling things, not mending them).

Finally, don't blame the ST for your mouse trouble!

## What, me violent?

#### Dear TGM

Playing a computer game involves coordination and dexterity of the eyes, brain and hands. Looking at a joystick being used to play doesn't seem to show much violence. Computer games transfer skill and concentration onto the screen as violence. Real violence, which involves physical force, involves no skill, it's just a normally asper, adrenaline and a determination to destroy or overcome.

Seeing prisoners of war being shot during World War II on TV made me feel very angry. Knowing that they were actually dead, really dead (RIP), is not a pleasant thought.

But while playing games (and not me up and) I'm being entertained. I know the difference. Reality is the less word.

**Colin McKinley, Waterloo,  
Belgium**

PS Before I go, I'd like to know something. In *Generation 4*, a French computer magazine, it said that British software houses were going to stop producing games especially for the Amiga, but just do porting from the ST, because of the amount of money on the Amiga.

Is this true? I have an Amiga and I'm worried.

Many software houses do port straight from the ST to the Amiga, and the primary problem — which reduces sales of Amiga software, and thus makes special development a waste of money — is no doubt a contributing factor. But there's no question of everyone giving up on the Commodore machine.

The rest of your letter is an eloquent defence of so-called "violent" games. Well said.

## C16: Better than Amiga!

#### Dear TGM

I love reading TGM. I think it's the best magazine in the world! But I've only got a C16, and I think TGM would be ten times better if it had computers like the C16, ME5 and Commodore Plus-4 in it.

You could have a different page for these computers. What can afford an ST or an Amiga anyway? But if you cannot put these computers in, why have Spectrums in TGM? The C16 is only £25 less than a £65 Spectrum and £125 less than a £285 Spectrum.

The Spectrum computers all seem to have colour chips, which make them produce rubbish graphics! The C16 never has colour chips. So why not have it in this excellent mag?

**Simon Ward, New Brighton, Merseyside**



A £250 Spectrum only beats less than an Amiga 5000 less than a £1040 95, more than a £4000, and a better bet better than the C16. Maybe.

We do cover ME5, probably more than any other micro-OS/2 magazine in the western world. We don't cover C16 because hardly anyone's asked for it. If enough C16 owners write in with glowing praise, well, the matter will come under consideration at the next meeting of the Philips Machine To Cover Board (September 16 1993).

## PANIC!

#### Dear TGM

Right, prepare to hear from my lawyers within the next week — this is pure verbatim. It's just too much, you've overstepped the line this time.

Not more than a week back with immense gloe and sincere anticipation, I joyfully

## Broken by repairs

#### Dear TGM

I have a little customer's tale to tell. The story begins in December 1987, when I purchased an ST and printer for use as a word processor and for playing games. The machine was purchased from an independent computer

skipped down to my local newspaper, with one thought in mind. So I rushed through the sticker-adorned glass doors, looked wildly around, and then TISM left. I quickly paid the over-priced man at Add 99 for the golden object, and then rushed madly home.

Upon arrival, I began a close examination of this holy object. Page 1... 10... 20... all fine, but WHAT? THE? Pages 51 to 69 were for some unknown reason printed upside down and back to front.

Look, just because I reside down under (if there's one thing all Australians have, it's only folk who can't stop using that stupid cliché) it doesn't mean we need a special upside-down section here!!

But no, that wasn't the end of it — not only were pages 51-69 printed upside-down, they were also repeated, correctly I must add. I almost got a brain haemorrhage, because at one instant, page 57 seemed to be upside down compared to the rest, so I turned it over and went on, but now page 57 was the other way up... oh, how we do suffer for your lack.

Do you notice my mag is worth something now? It's like an incorrectly printed stamp? Cuz topology.

Walter James, Sydney, Australia

'It does happen at occasions,' says our Production Manager, flustered with embarrassment. Something to do with the leading machine getting carried away and munching up two 16-page sections instead of one, apparently. Thing has a mind of its own. Send us your Stephen King?

## Cheap at three-quarters the price

Dear TGM  
I was impressed by a US Gold advert which shows they have dropped their 16-bit games to £14.99. I hope that will inspire other companies to drop their prices as well.

Mark Jones, Lewins, Lancashire

It's certainly encouraging news, but let's hope a price

drop doesn't mean a drop in quality — so often the case where a £14.99 budget started.

Is this the beginning of true 16-bit budget?  
It will be interesting to see as a few months have went the £14.99 titles have added compared with those which £5 Gold are keeping at the higher price. If there is no great difference, no doubt £14.99 will be phased out. So go buy 'em now while you can!

## Piracy corner(ed)



Dear TGM

At what happened to the article you promised us at the end of TGM15 about a software raid in Glasgow? We did get an anticipatory article, but no details to denounce potential piracy.  
To be my opinion, Rob Miles very underrated the Zak McKracken And The Alien Mindbenders adventure reviews in TGM16. This game is very amusing, contains a highly original plot and is narratively brilliant. What other game has such a brilliant opening sequence, and the option to spend to time in turn into a yeh? A mark of about 90-95% would have been a little more realistic.

C) You MUST realise that the Fun Fair section of the TGM Classifieds is used for getting contacts to swap copies of games. Surely TGM are not naive enough to not be able to intercept phishers like 'contacts wanted to swap games'. I can't imagine people sending originals through the post, so please be a little bit more strict when selecting adverts, or we'll all be up the spout.

d) Finally, well done for not putting any stored letters about the ST in the Amiga, as it's fairly obvious that the electronic 16-bit MFL doorbolt can knock both of them around.

Keep up the good work, and enjoy travelling choices.  
Grant Robson, Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire

at first, that wasn't meant as a promise. It was a bit of late news that we do just another piracy expose in the near future — this time with more-guy details.

b) Many people have agreed with you about Zak. But not everyone WANTS to spend to drive a home.

c) Yes, we're well aware, and it's a much-debated problem here. The trouble is that it's administratively very difficult to report people's ads when they've paid for them, the only other option is to close the Fun Fair section entirely which would be another example of phishers spoiling things for everyone.

In the meantime, as part of the whole game industry's attack on piracy (TGM15 news), we're selecting information on phishers who respond to frequent ads, and sending it to the Federation Against Software Theft. If anybody reading this has been contacted by a phisher through the TGM Classifieds, please send us a copy of the letter. We'll remain anonymous if you wish.

d) No, we think the Amiga is better.

## £50 WORTH OF SOFTWARE MUST BE WON!

There's £50 worth of software — your choice — for each reader's Star Letter. Write to: Readerpage, TGM, PO Box 19, Lasham, Shropshire ST9 1DB.

And rest assured that even if your letter doesn't get printed, it's been read and where necessary shown to all the TGM staffers who can use YOUR suggestions to improve the mag.

## In praise of simple minds

Dear TGM

There's no doubt that the best formula for games is simplicity. Of course, really complicated strategy games are good too, but they've got to be great from the start.

Though I'm always on the look-out for games with good graphics and sound, I find that games like Popcorn, Zak McKracken etc are the best.

So, all you game publishers and developers out there, design a great game, and when you're done that, and only then, incorporate the graphics and sound.

The problem with most 16-bit games is that game developers make the playing the last element in a game to worry about. That's why Spectrum games always work, the machine has no real graphics and sound capabilities, and therefore playability and game design are the only selling points.

Of course, there are good 16-bit games, but not enough. The problem is, the best games are usually the ones which aren't hyped most.

Paul Rothwell, Plymouth, The Netherlands

This one will run and run. To be honest, Spectrum games don't always work at all — there have always been some dreadful ones. And some 16-bit games are brilliant (think of Popcorn, Verities, Typhoon, Thompson, Vindictive, War In Middle Earth).

A more serious threat, which many seem to have ignored, is that 8-bit games are trying to improve graphics and sound to compete with the 16-bit. And 8-bit have comparably small memories. This could eventually mean the 8-bit low gameplay too...



***MURDER!***



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...the name  
of the game

**W**hen a guy loves his girl—he loves his friend! Most, in the final Chapter, *Unforgettable* must reckon of his working and fighting machines as he shares his girlfriend's capture, though first it is his flight across remote and war-torn lands of a dangerous and

...the present ... In a future you'll never forget! ... but remember ... your gift wants to see you alive!

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